the weekly
Standard

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YASSER ARAFAT'S ENDLESS SECOND CHANCES
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Fear and Loathing

Why so many Arabs and Europeans hate America and Israel

BY DAVID BROOKS

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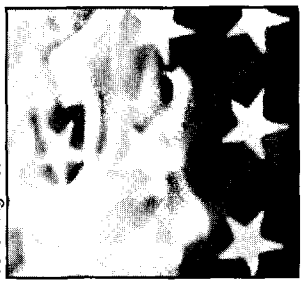

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When Frogs Attack

Take a minute, won't you please, to acknowledge the sufferings of a too often overlooked class of victims in this war-on-terrorism business and the associated crisis in the Middle East. We mean, of course, French political activists and intellectuals, who are stretched awfully thin at the moment.

There is national tradition to be upheld—so some of them have flown off to Ramallah, the better to assist a foreign dictator currently murdering Jewish people. There are *beaux gestes* to be made—so French president Jacques Chirac and prime minister Lionel Jospin have dispatched celebrity thinker Bernard-Henri Lévy to Afghanistan to help with post-Taliban reconstruction efforts. Lévy says he will offer the Karzai government "words that carry the weight of deeds, texts that are also acts." Because, lookit: "Even when philosophy went through its Spinozist-Althusserian phase, it still believed thinking could equate to doing."

So much thinking to be done, so little time. Not enough time, for example, for the post-Spinozist-Althusserians to come up with an effective response to France's recent wave of synagogue firebombings. But still enough time—always enough time—to read books!

One book, in particular, which is Number 1 on the Amazon/France bestseller list and still "flying off the shelves" at the FNAC megastore in Paris. This would be *11 Septembre 2001: L'Effroyable Imposture*, by Thierry Meyssan, president of the leftist think tank Réseau Voltaire.

L'Effroyable Imposture ("The Appalling Fraud") argues, as its cover-copy indicates, that "*Aucun avion ne s'est écrasé sur le Pentagone!*"—no plane crashed into the Pentagon. "I believe the government is lying," Meyssan has told reporters; the Americans, he contends, deliberately blew up their own Defense Department headquarters. Which is a very American kind of thing to do, as anyone who has studied the *mise-en-scène* of a Sylvester Stallone movie can tell you.

Monsieur Meyssan finds proof for his theory in the official account of the September 11 Pentagon disaster. Where are the wings and fuselage of this so-called American Airlines Flight 77, he wonders? Why are there no photographs of the wreckage? Could a Boeing 757 flying 350 miles per hour and carrying thousands of gallons of combustible jet fuel really get smashed into nothingness merely by the force of a head-on collision with the world's largest concrete-and-steel office building? *Incroyable, non?* Also, Meyssan asks sarcastically, "What became of the passengers. . . . Are they dead?"

Actually, yes, they are dead. And since texts are also acts, Thierry Meyssan—along with the thousands of Frenchmen who have bought his ludicrous book—owe the grieving relatives an apology. ♦

Polls Apart

President Clinton's habit of polling everything from where to take his vacation to what kind of pet to get has been thoroughly mocked. Even George W. Bush has occasionally joined in the fun. In his cover story for the latest *Washington Monthly*, Joshua Green reports an anecdote about a luncheon last year at the White House for former presidential press secretaries. The president dropped by and discussed some of the domestic security issues the White House was grappling with. At which point, "former Clinton press secretary Dee Dee Myers piped up, 'What do the poll numbers say?' All eyes turned to Bush. Without missing a beat, the famous Bush smirk crossed the president's face and he replied, 'In this White House, Dee Dee, we don't poll on something as important as national security.'"

Green uses this as his point of departure in going after Bush for what the writer apparently believes is an epic case of Washington hypocrisy: President Bush, it turns out, has pollsters! And they do lots of polling! Just like Clinton!

Well, truthfully, not just like Clinton. Going through the records of the Republican National Committee, Green comes up with an estimate of about $1 million spent on polling in Bush's first year, about half of Clinton's first year spending. But a more revealing distinction between the two presidencies is this fact, which Green, bizarrely, seems to think reflects unflatteringly on Bush: "While Clinton used polling to craft popular policies, Bush uses polling to spin unpopular ones—arguably a much more cynical undertaking."

Huh? Arguably how? We'd like to see the "argument" according to which polling to drum up support for unpopular policies is more cynical than polling to find out what your policy should be in the first place. Green is smart enough to avoid fleshing out his "arguably" clause. Not so Maureen Dowd, who built a whole column last week around Green's piece, gamely trying to defend the proposition that Bush's polling is more cynical than Clinton's.

Here's her best shot: "At least Mr. Clinton's impulse was democratic. He yearned to do what we wanted him to do. . . . Mr. Bush's impulse is autocratic. He wants to do what he (or Cheney & Rove) wants to do—and is desperate only to find a way to shove it down our throats."

You can call that feeble, or you can

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call it taking one for the team. Either way, we suspect the "revelation" that the Bush team polls as an adjunct to and not a substitute for policymaking is going to strike people who remember the Dick Morris era as something to be relieved about, not scandalized by. ♦

Saddam's Apologist, cont.

Speculation that Scott Speicher, a pilot shot down in Iraq during the Gulf War, might still be alive in an Iraqi prison led to an offer on March 24 from the Iraqi Foreign Ministry "to prove our goodwill . . . and refute the repeated U.S. fabrications against Iraq." The Iraqis offered to receive a team of inspectors, provided it's led by former U.N. weapons inspector Scott Ritter. As readers of this magazine will remember from Stephen F. Hayes's Nov. 19, 2001, cover story ("Saddam Hussein's American Apologist"), Ritter was the most dogged U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq throughout the mid-1990s, but later converted to the view that Saddam Hussein has been victimized by America.

Others are perhaps unaware of the 180-degree turn in Ritter's views. Fox News's Greta Van Susteren asked Ritter why Saddam Hussein would welcome him back. Ritter: "Well, that's actually a good question to be asking the Iraqis because, frankly speaking, I was stunned when I—when I was made aware of this."

Our guess is that Iraq's invitation has something to do with Ritter's recently released documentary, *In Shifting Sands*. Ritter's film was financed by $400,000 from Shakir Al-Khafaji, an Iraqi-American businessman who helps Saddam Hussein put on "expatriate conferences." Ritter has acknowledged, in an interview with this magazine, that Al-Khafaji is "openly sympathetic with the regime in Baghdad."

Despite this, Ritter claims in a March 26 article for the *Albany Times-Union* that U.S. government officials had contacted him about going on the mission. We can't verify that, but in the unlikely event the Bush administration is considering sending Ritter, we hope they'll watch his Iraqi-financed propaganda film first. ♦

On DeLay, on DeLay

House Majority Whip Tom DeLay last week gave the finest speech on events in the Middle East by any official in Washington. It got somewhat overtaken by the president's speech the next day, which may explain why it didn't get more attention, or maybe the media just have too much invested in their demonizing of DeLay. You can find the full text at *majoritywhip.gov*. Here's our favorite passage:

> No one should expect the people of Israel to negotiate with groups pursuing the fundamental goal of destroying them. During four decades of terrorism, Yasser Arafat has proven his total contempt for human life. He is completely untrustworthy.
>
> So, we should support Israel as they dismantle the Palestinian leadership that foments violence and fosters hate. Arafat and his Authority have been an impediment to peace and a threat to the emergence of moderate Palestinian voices. ♦

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Casual

A Sorry State

The woman at the hotel front desk, who bore a name tag reading Jessica Doodle, must have got high marks in Service with a Smile class at hotel management school. She beamed at me as if I were every present under the Christmas tree, and said, "Welcome, sir, to Colonial Williamsburg!" She didn't say *Thank God you're finally here!* but she implied it. As she tapped my information into her computer, she looked like she was about to explode into tears of joy. "You can pick up your tour passes, sir, down the hill at the Visitors Center!" From her tone, I got the impression this "Visitors Center" she was talking about was a 95-room château overlooking the Mediterranean.

It turned out to be not that kind of place. We had advance reservations, but the people manning that desk were knocking off early. They waddled off sullenly, as if they'd heard a rumor that McDonald's was about to run out of Big Macs. So we got into another enormous line, which crawled like the ones at airport security checkpoints. It was full of shoving parents and complaining children, the former keeping the latter in line by means of the occasional slap. The atmosphere was about as relaxed as the embassy roof during the evacuation of Saigon. So I sent my family back to the hotel.

Big mistake. When I emerged from the front of the line an hour later, I was told that each individual had to be *photographed* for his own pass. (I also learned that, in a kind of sick joke, these were called "Freedom Passes.") By the time I'd reassembled the family in the Visitors Center, the line was twice as long. It was dinnertime when we got to the front.

"Hmm," the agent said, "*This* is not where you pick up your passes."

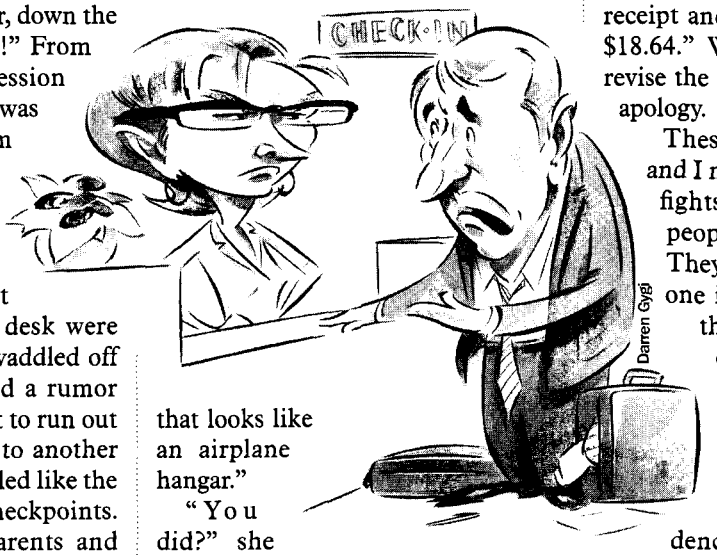
"It's not?"

"No, sir. Your passes are waiting for you at the hotel front desk."

In almost no time I was stomping across the hotel lobby in the direction of Jessica Doodle.

"Hello, Sir!" She gave me a broad smile, as if to say: *It's that wonderful man again!*

"Hello, Jessica," I said. "My family planned on spending this afternoon at Colonial Williamsburg, but instead we spent it standing in line in a place that looks like an airplane hangar."



"You did?" she beamed. *What fun for you!*

"Yes, I did. And when I got to the front of the line, they told me you had my passes."

"They did?" she beamed. *Those crazy cut-ups!* She tapped at her computer. "Well, here they are, right here!"

I was not going to yell at Jessica, but I was not going to leave without an apology either. "And ...?" I said.

"And here they are, right here!" she repeated. Her joy was undiminished.

"Is that all you have to say?"

"I guess so, sir, unless there's something else I can do to help you." Her eyes were twinkling with sincerity.

"Em ... What I'm saying, Jessica, is that when we arrived, you had our tickets. But instead of giving them to us, you sent us on a wild-goose chase. As a result, we spent the whole afternoon standing in line unnecessarily."

"Wow!" she said. *You are such a wonderful, fascinating man!* So I left without an apology.

This happens to me all the time lately: not getting an apology in a situation where any person with a milligram of courtesy would offer one.

A few weeks ago, I bought a couple of cheap paperbacks in Borders from a clerk who had a big nose ring bored through his septum, as if the bookstore job were only a sidelight and his real calling were as a draft animal. It might as well have been because he mis-keyed my purchase. The total came to $118.64. "Hey," I said, "that can't be right." He looked down at the receipt and said, "Yeah, it should be $18.64." Well, duh. I *assume* you'll revise the amount. What I want is an apology.

These are not confrontations, and I never seek to turn them into fights. (Why should I? These people are uniformly "nice.") They're just situations in which one is left with the impression that the world is indifferent or hostile until one is reassured otherwise. Such reassurance, ultimately, is all an apology is.

Maybe we should blame the American tendency to solve everything through lawsuits. Maybe the hard-and-fast rule of the courtroom— Never Confess to Anything—has seeped out into the public at large. Or maybe all the Marxist warnings about technological alienation are finally being borne out. Maybe taking orders from a computer all day renders a person so passive and fatalistic that he winds up not believing himself responsible for *anything*.

Whatever the cause, it seems likely we're approaching the End of Manners. Forget love—it's being an American service employee that means never having to say you're sorry.

Christopher Caldwell

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Yucca Mountain Erupts

As an environmental scientist and public health specialist, I want to compliment Stephen F. Hayes for his very sensible and balanced article on the Yucca Mountain project ("Nevada Goes Nuclear," April 1). We should all recognize the environmental, climatic, and strategic benefits of nuclear energy. Storing spent fuel at over 100 plant sites is an invitation to terrorists who wish us harm. It is long past due that the federal government meet its obligations to take possession of and dispose of high-level nuclear waste such as spent fuel as required by law.

Stewart Farber
Bridgeport, CT

I enjoy reading The Weekly Standard most of the time. I find it both enlightening and entertaining, and I also usually like it because I can leave it lying around the house without worrying about what a child may see.

So, might I ask what the point was of publishing the photo of the whorehouse brochure in Stephen F. Hayes's "Nevada Goes Nuclear"? I suppose I should appreciate this visual aid, but I'll be darned if I just don't have that intellectual capacity. Yes, it was enlightening to read a first-hand account of the thoughts of the brothel workers. The article wouldn't have been complete without it.

In the future, however, I hope The Weekly Standard will keep in mind that some of its subscribers do not wish to see this type of thing. As for your male readers who may have appreciated the picture, they can surely get their jollies elsewhere.

Elizabeth Bean
Huntsville, AL

In Jesus' Name

In his provocative piece "Bush vs. Nietzsche," James W. Ceaser writes that two "connotations of the concept of evil draw at least implicitly on elements of religious faith, though not Christianity alone" (April 1). One is "the idea that in the presence of evil, resistance is a positive obligation." The other is that "in the struggle between good and evil, the universe is not indifferent."

Ceaser omits, curiously and conspicuously in the context of an article concerning how President Bush's Christian faith informs his use of the term and concept of evil, any consideration of the direct teaching of Jesus on responding to evil.

Where in the life and teaching of Jesus does one find any support for responding to evil with violent force? Nowhere. In fact, Jesus teaches "resist not evil" and that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." It is in these counterintuitive teachings that one finds the paradoxical, truly transforming power of the Christian message.

Theologians from Augustine to Bonhoeffer have wrestled with how to reconcile the use of violent physical force to fight evil with Christianity. Doing so required them to go outside the life and teaching of Jesus, and even then they met with marginal success at best. Their efforts do not relieve individual Christians from the responsibility of wrestling with the issue themselves.

President Bush claims, no doubt sincerely, that Jesus changed his heart. Yet he has not provided any indication of how his changed Christian heart can square war with the words and deeds of Jesus.

This is not to say the war on terrorism is morally wrong. It is only to acknowledge the practical limits on the use of Christian notions of evil to legitimize and support the war and to ask that those simultaneously making war while invoking the name of Christ provide some fuller, more satisfactory effort at reconciliation of the two. Without this, Christianity appears, if it does not in fact become, a religion of convenience and expedience.

John David Dyche
Louisville, KY

Mean-o Reno

I laughed so hard reading Matt Labash's "Janet Reno Rides Again" (March 25) that I think I had a minor stroke, and my co-workers enjoyed it as much as I did. Perhaps it's true we have no common decency. However, this is the only type of article that I care to read about Reno. Anything else and I might be forced to think about the utterly horrifying things she did to our country.

Christine Petrella
Hickory, NC

Happy Hour

Ah, sweet nostalgia! Schlitz beer. And I'm a native New Yorker! With his "When You're Out Of Schlitz . . ." Casual (April 8), Stephen F. Hayes takes me for a pleasant trip to way back when.

Schlitz was my brew of choice back in the 1950s. Here in Westchester County it was marketed as a "premium" beer, and it cost a nickel or dime more than the local brews such as Ballantine and Schaefer. But it was worth every penny.

When I hit a St. Louis watering hole on my way to Air Force Tech School in East St. Louis, I discovered that Ballantine and Schaefer were going for "premium" prices while Schlitz, Bud, and other somewhat "local" beers went for less.

What a bargain—to be able to chug my favorite brew on the cheap. It made a big difference on my $82/month GI pay.

At the time, another beer was coming on strong here in the East—Miller High Life. All the girls loved it. Beer was the only choice my dates ever had, considering my lack of a living wage then. Miller has changed a great deal over the years. In 1950, it was beer-flavored syrup. That's why the other sex was so fond of it—sort of like the ladies who insist on sipping their Manhattans through a straw.

I thank Stephen F. Hayes for a look back to wonderful yet less prosperous times, and for a stroll down memory lane.

Joel L. Walker
Dover Plains, NY

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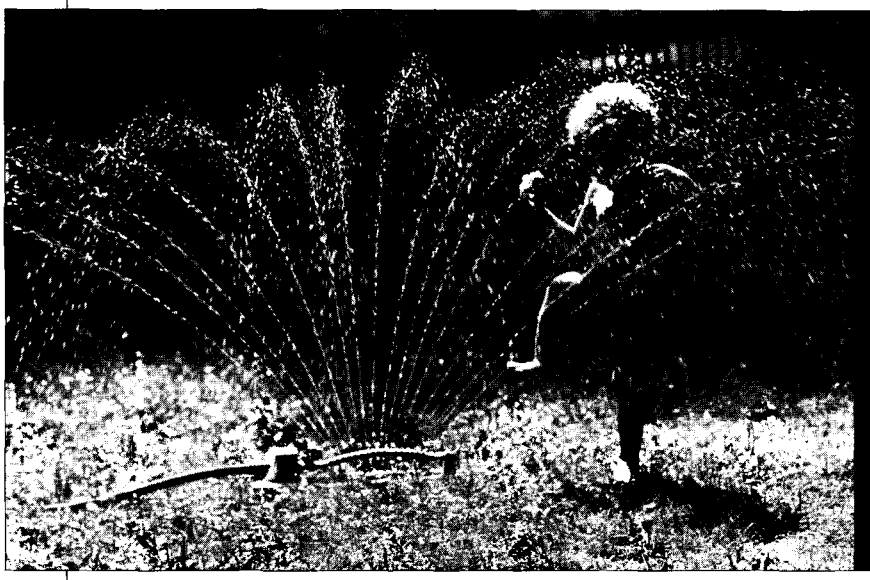

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the weekly Standard

Remember the Bush Doctrine

U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan is happy with President Bush's apparent Middle East policy switch. So is European Union president Romano Prodi, French president Jacques Chirac, and the British foreign ministry. The *New York Times* editorial page is very happy. And, really, that's what American foreign policy is all about, isn't it?

Until now, that's not how George W. Bush saw things. One of Bush's most admirable and most important qualities as president has been his Reaganesque indifference to such carping. The Europeans and the American foreign policy establishment howled for weeks after Bush gave his "Axis of Evil" speech, but Bush held his ground, soldiered on without a hint of self-doubt, and the critics more or less gave up.

Now, however, it looks like an administration tough enough to wage war in Afghanistan and target Iraq could not withstand a few days of heckling from the European Union and the *New York Times*. Alarmed by a few Arab protests, alarmed, it seems, by a carefully calibrated Egyptian downgrading of relations with Israel—Cairo didn't even expel the Israeli ambassador—Bush's advisers determined that they had to do something. So the president, after days of resisting advice to criticize a fellow democracy fighting terrorism, gave his "enough is enough" speech. It wasn't moral equivalence, but it wasn't exactly moral clarity either.

It could have been worse. Bush did not call for an immediate halt in Israel's military operations. And Secretary of State Powell won't be arriving in Israel until the end of next week, giving Israeli forces more time to round up terrorists and uncover their caches of arms and explosives. Israeli military commanders say they may well need more time to complete their mission of pulling down the terrorist network in the territories. In the wake of the Passover Massacre, Israel should be given the time it needs.

Indeed, the current Israeli military action, derided in many circles here and abroad as the mad scheme of a vengeful Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, happens to be wildly popular among the vast majority of Israelis—in a recent poll over 70 percent expressed support for continued military action. As the *Washington Post*'s Lee Hockstader reports, Sharon "has never enjoyed more political harmony at home." And for good reason. The Israeli anti-terrorist operation is not mad. It is working. No one expects it to end all further suicide bomb attacks. But, as it happens, the daily bombings paused once the tanks rolled. Meanwhile, Israeli forces have arrested or killed several dozen terrorists—remember, that is what Yasser Arafat was supposed to do under the so-called Tenet plan—and have found large amounts of weapons, ammunition, explosives, and bomb-making equipment.

Israeli forces have also found something else: evidence that suicide bomber operations and other terrorist actions were paid for by Yasser Arafat. On Thursday the Israeli government released two documents it had seized from Arafat's offices. Both authorized payments to Palestinian militants suspected of shooting and bombing attacks. Both bore the signature of Yasser Arafat. We understand that the State Department, which recently declared one organization under Arafat's control—the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades—to be a terrorist entity, is now considering adding other Arafat-controlled organizations to the list. How long before Arafat himself receives the designation he deserves?

Whatever else President Bush means to do, he should not prevent Israel from completing its anti-terrorist operation. How would the president have liked it—how would the American people have liked it—had someone stepped in after two weeks of the war in Afghanistan and said, "Enough is enough"? If the administration feels the need to engage in faux peace-process shenanigans to get the Europeans and the *New York Times* off its back, fine. But we trust the president isn't misled. It is very much in America's interest that Israel be given time to complete its current mission.

Otherwise, the lesson will be clear: Terrorism pays. Nor should anyone be under any illusion that peace talks can proceed while terrorist attacks continue, no matter how many times Colin Powell travels to the region. The fact is that only after the Israeli government finishes dismantling the terror network in the territories will it be possible to

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talk seriously about making peace and achieving a lasting settlement with the Palestinian people.

The president needs to ensure that Thursday's speech does not mark a significant turn away from the straight and admirable path of the Bush Doctrine. He's given Arafat—again—one more chance. This really has to be the last one. If the secretary of state goes to the region and conveys that message, to Arafat and to the Arab governments, his trip could be helpful. If he goes to reiterate the Bush Doctrine and make clear to the Arab world that there will be no exceptions and that it's time to choose between civilization and terror, then his trip could be more than helpful. If he goes to negotiate between Sharon and Arafat—between a democracy and a terrorist—then the trip could be a worse disaster even than Vice President Cheney's failed mission last month. Everything now depends on what the president and his administration say and do.

Meanwhile, President Bush needs to stay focused on Iraq. Many of those who want him to become deeply and personally involved in the Middle East peace process also want him to do nothing about Saddam Hussein. In the Arab world, in Europe, in Washington and New York, and in some corners of the administration itself, there is the hope that Bush will become so immersed in peace-processing that he'll have neither the time, the energy, nor the inclination to tackle the more fundamental problem in the Middle East. By turning Bush into a Middle East mediator, they think they can shunt him off the road that leads to real security and peace—the road that runs through Baghdad. We trust the president will see and avoid this trap.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

The Future Is Now, II

In February 2001, after detailing a series of recent "advances" in biotechnology and genetics—genetically modified monkeys, the use of human fetal tissue in rodents, the granting of patents for "hybrid" man-animal embryos, and the harvesting of hearts, brains, and other organs from dead children in a British hospital—we editorialized, "The Future Is Now." The moral and political questions raised by human biotechnology, we argued then, deserve a central place in American public debate.

Much has happened in the fourteen months since:

—In the spring of 2001, embryonic stem cells and cloning emerged as central issues in American politics. In June, the House of Representatives passed, by a vote of 265-162, a ban on all human cloning. In August, President Bush, after months of deliberation, delivered his decision about federal funding of embryonic stem cell research in a special televised address to the nation—the first of his presidency. As he put it: "We have arrived at that brave new world that seemed so distant in 1932, when Aldous Huxley wrote about human beings created in test tubes."

—In November 2001, Advanced Cell Technology created what were believed to be the first cloned human embryos. When asked whether his technique would eventually be used to clone newborn human beings, Michael West, the company's president, replied: "I'm not an expert in ethics. . . . But, biologically, scientifically, I don't know of any reason why that would not happen." "For the sake of medicine," West added, "we need to set our fears aside."

—Now, in early 2002, we read of yet another wave of biotechnological advances. The most shocking was the reported creation by Chinese scientists of cloned human embryos using human DNA and rabbit eggs. Researchers in both the United States and Japan claimed advances in artificial wombs. Advanced Cell Technology reported work on fetal stem cells—not embryonic, but fetal stem cells—taken from cows, raising the specter of such work in human beings. A company named Genetics Savings & Clone announced the cloning of a cat. Other researchers reported the cloning of rabbits "ready in time for Easter." And renegade Italian fertility doctor Severino Antinori claimed last week that one of the participants in his human cloning project is eight weeks pregnant with a human clone.

The list goes on and on, but the lesson is clear: The time really is now. The moment has arrived for setting limits on—and reconsidering—the science that leads to what Francis Fukuyama calls "a posthuman future." Do we want to go down the road of using developing human life as a resource for experiments? Do we want to transform human procreation into a form of technological manufacture? Do we want to design our descendants? How much do we want to modify the chemical and biological workings of brain and body?

It is not always simple to draw lines between genetic therapy and eugenic enhancement, between scientific experimentation and exploitation, between a better human world and a new, inhuman one. But our moral sentiments, when faced with the developments of the last few years,

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A world of ideas on public policy.

Better Health at Lower Cost? It Won't Equate Unless We Educate

by Karen L. Katen

The twenty-first century has arrived, carrying with it the benefit of ongoing medical innovation and the promise of additional scientific breakthroughs. Today, Americans have the possibility of better health and more effective healthcare than ever before, yet we are not nearly as healthy as we might be. Too many people still suffer from high blood pressure and its associated problems; millions of diabetics cannot control their disease; and men and women throughout the country delay or avoid the health screenings that might save them from cancer and heart disease.

It's not that people don't care – or don't want to know – about their health and well-being. Interest in health has never been higher, with more than 82 percent of Americans wanting a more active role in managing their healthcare. The problem isn't one of interest but of understanding. Too often, people cannot understand the health information they receive from medical professionals, other caregivers, neighbors, or the Internet.

Health literacy – the ability to read, understand, and act upon health information – is fundamental to promoting human health and improving healthcare. Yet in health care settings around the country, the health literacy of patients is often taken for granted. Every day, medical caregivers assume that patients can read, understand, and fill out medical history questionnaires, insurance papers, consent forms, educational pamphlets, and prescription information. But many patients cannot, and their resulting loss of self-esteem and motivation can undermine their opportunities for improved health.

Unfortunately, low health literacy disproportionately affects some of our most vulnerable populations: the poor, the elderly, certain ethnic minorities, and often the chronically ill. At a time when consumers are taking more responsibility for their own healthcare, it is imperative that these groups do not get left behind.

> ***Health literacy – the ability to read, understand, and act upon health information – is fundamental to promoting human health and improving healthcare***

Abandoning these people and others who suffer from poor health literacy is not only unconscionable – it also places a tremendous burden on society. The costs associated with the resulting public health problems – including more frequent and lengthy emergency room and hospital visits, increased Medicare and Medicaid expenditures, and greater out-of-pocket costs incurred by patients – could reach as high as $73 billion annually.

But the most important cost is unacceptable human suffering. Adverse health outcomes, such as prolonged sickness and increased morbidity and mortality, are associated with low health literacy. It is unthinkable that with all of the treatments and cures provided by modern science and technology, patients continue to suffer health problems because they cannot understand health instructions, access and use the services available to them and, in short, manage their own health.

Clearly, physicians have the primary challenge in communicating with their patients, but hospitals, health insurers, government agencies, pharmacies, and pharmaceutical companies also bear an important responsibility. Patient communications often meet scientific or regulatory standards but fall well below an individual's ability to understand.

Solving a problem of this complexity requires the articulation of a compelling vision, alignment to a common set of goals, and energetic partnerships among all of those affected: patients and physicians, employers and employees, and the private and public sectors. Pfizer has made a significant commitment to funding long-term research that will help us learn more about the causes, consequences, and remedies of low health literacy. While we await the results of this needed research, we can take some steps immediately.

As a beginning, we can ensure that all health-related communications are simple enough for everyone to understand. At Pfizer, we are redesigning all of our patient-directed communications to meet this standard. We are also striving to make those communications culturally relevant and linguistically accessible to our increasingly diverse population. Government, hospitals, and social service organizations should do the same.

Tackling low health literacy may not seem as glamorous or dramatic as harnessing the genomic revolution to produce a "miracle cure." There are no easy answers or sweeping solutions. But the millions of people who suffer from this condition will be helped sooner and more dramatically by diligence and dedication to this cause than by any science I can see. And it must be done. Our shared belief in doing all that we can do to improve the health of all people requires it. Nothing less will do.

Karen L. Katen is Executive Vice President of Pfizer Inc, President of Pfizer Global Pharmaceuticals, and President, U.S. Pharmaceuticals.

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revolt at what may soon be possible: corporate ownership of genetically modified human embryos; the production of living human clones; the use of pre-implantation genetic screening and abortion to select "better" babies; the use of human fetuses as fodder for experiments.

Some lines are difficult to draw. Some are simple and clarifying. In the next few weeks, the Senate will vote on one of the most important—whether to ban human cloning. This vote will set a precedent—one way or the other, for better or worse—for our effort to confront the moral challenges posed by our biogenetic powers. The vote looks likely to be a close one, between two fundamentally different alternatives. One is the Brownback-Landrieu bill, almost identical to legislation already passed by the House. It would ban all human cloning, is supported by the president, and deserves to become law.

The Kennedy-Feinstein and Harkin-Specter bills, which will probably be combined into one alternative, would allow the creation of cloned human embryos for research and destruction. The biotechnology industry and patient advocacy groups have falsely sold this research as the key to imminent cures. They have misleadingly described it in ways that obscure its connection to reproductive cloning (it is the first step down that path) and sanitize its essence (the creation and destruction of nascent human life for research purposes).

Consider this new radio advertisement by the Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research:

"My name is Kris Gulden. I'm a former police officer and triathlete. Due to a spinal cord injury, I'm now in a wheel chair. In my dreams I still walk and run. And I wake up every morning hoping for a cure. I'm sure someone close to you—someone with Parkinson's or Alzheimer's or diabetes does too. But now we have hope, thanks to a new kind of medical research, called somatic cell nuclear transfer—or SCNT. Some people call it therapeutic cloning, although it has nothing to do with copying human beings."

Of course, it is medical researchers themselves who invented the term "therapeutic cloning." And the supposed promise of this research is precisely that it *would* create an embryonic *copy* of human patients in order to provide stem cells that the body's immune system won't reject, or to supply the means to model particular diseases. Apparently the "advancement of medical research" justifies falsification of the facts.

Such sophistry—and the world it portends—must not be permitted to prevail. The Senate now has the opportunity to act to ban all human cloning. If it fails, where will we draw the line? How will we ever summon the will to avert the even darker nightmares that will surely follow?

—*William Kristol*

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The Bush Strategy for the Middle East

Yes, he has one. **BY FRED BARNES**

PRESIDENT BUSH only looks like he's operating by the seat of his pants in Middle East policy. Actually he has a three-pronged strategy. Prong one is to give the Israelis as much time as possible for their military drive to uproot the Palestinian terrorist infrastructure. Number two is to keep some distance between the United States and Israel so as not to end up tied to everything Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon does. And the third is to keep other important American interests in mind, including the desire for allies when military action is taken against Iraq, probably later this year. What happened last week, when the president called on Israel to pull back its troops and dispatched Secretary of State Colin Powell to the Middle East, was that part three, America's other interests, became more urgent than number one, giving Sharon a long leash.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

The fundamental idea behind the strategy is to give aid and comfort to Israel, but without Bush ever saying so explicitly. Instead, the president couched his favoritism toward Israel in an endorsement of Israel's right to defend itself against terrorist assaults. Bush also reiterated that he's "a committed friend of Israel." But the strategy isn't to side with Israel at all costs. And if the costs get too great in the view of the White House, the president will have to change course and yank Israel back. Within five days of Israeli tanks' entering the West Bank in pursuit of terrorists, Bush decided the costs had gotten out of hand. His speech in the Rose Garden announcing a new course was delivered two days later.

What were the costs? CIA director George Tenet warned about the ominous spread of anti-American and anti-Israel protests, particularly in Jordan, where the government of King Abdullah is weak. Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak threatened to eliminate diplomatic relations with Israel entirely, a threat that especially alarmed Bush. British prime minister Tony Blair said the violence between Israel and the Palestinians needed to be curbed before joint U.S.-British action against Iraq could be taken.

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The State Department clamored as usual for restraining the Israelis. And White House advisers fretted over how impotent and confused Bush looked in his reluctance to intervene forcefully. So the costs, as perceived by the White House, were wider upheaval in the Middle East, harm to so-called moderate Arab states, alienation of other countries, a reversal of Egypt's historic recognition of Israel, a roadblock to moving against Iraq, and potential political harm to Bush.

That's quite a list. Still, Bush could have resisted the pressure to step in and given the Israelis more time, but certainly not the additional four to six weeks that Israeli military officials said it would take to finish the job of quashing Palestinian terrorism. Even when bending, however, he was far more passionate in denouncing Arafat than in calling for Sharon to ease up. In fact, he appeared to read most of his 18-minute statement from a teleprompter—except for the section excoriating Arafat, which Bush seemed to know by heart.

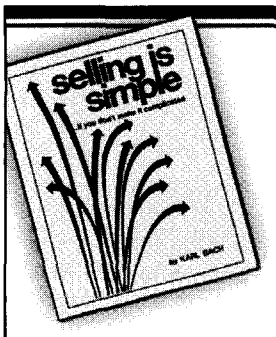
Now Bush has two Arafat dilemmas, one rhetorical, one real. Bush was embarrassed earlier last week when asked by reporters if the Bush doctrine, which treats leaders who harbor or sponsor terrorists as terrorists themselves, applied to Arafat or whether there was a double standard. The president's answer was lame and not what he really believes. Bush thinks Arafat is a terrorist and has been for years, but that's not what he said. Bush said Arafat "has agreed to a peace process [and] has negotiated with parties as to how to achieve peace." Reporters interpreted this as Bush's saying Arafat isn't a terrorist.

In the Rose Garden, the president came closer to speaking candidly about Arafat and resolving his rhetorical problem. He restated the Bush doctrine this way: "Everyone must choose. You're either with the civilized world or you're with the terrorists." He indicated leaders in the Middle East would be judged by how they proceed "in word and deed against terrorist acts." As for Arafat, Bush said he "has not consistently opposed or confronted terrorists." That was an understatement, but it got the point across that Arafat is now on probation.

And that leads to the real Arafat problem. Is Bush giving him one last chance to abandon terrorism as a tool in fighting Israel, or is this merely one *more* chance in the parade of opportunities given Arafat over the past three decades? Arafat, of course, has never seized the moment to do the right thing. Even when he's promised to stop waging terrorism against Israel, as he did in the 1993 Oslo accords, the terrorist attacks have continued, a fact Bush noted. "At Oslo and elsewhere, Chairman Arafat renounced terror as an instrument of his cause, and he agreed to control it," the president said. "He's not done so."

Bush's comments, plus everything we know he believes about Arafat, point to this being Arafat's one last chance. As Robert Satloff of the Washington Institute on Near East Policy points out, Bush no longer insists the "path to peace" runs through Arafat. Once Israel pulls its troops back, Bush said in the Rose Garden, "responsible Palestinian leaders . . . must step forward and show the world that they are truly on the side of peace." Notice he didn't mention Arafat in this context. Yes, the president occasionally gets irritated at Sharon, but he loathes Arafat. Now, it will be up to Bush to hold Arafat accountable if the Powell mission fails because Arafat declines to crack down on terrorists. Then, Bush will be left with one course. He'll have to back Israel in sending Arafat into exile and praying for new Palestinian leaders willing to achieve statehood through a peace settlement with Israel rather than to seek a victory over Israel through terrorism.

For all of Bush's toughness since September 11, he's discovered a political truism about the presidency. It's simply this: Presidents are not



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allowed to be passive. In a recession, they must have a sweeping program, even if doing nothing is the best policy for reviving the economy. In the Middle East, the right thing for Bush to do was keep Powell at home a bit longer, ignore the pressure, and let Israel proceed with its anti-terrorist mission. But that would have left Bush looking like a president who refuses to step forward and lead. This was a cost he wasn't willing to pay. ♦

Radical Islam in Nigeria

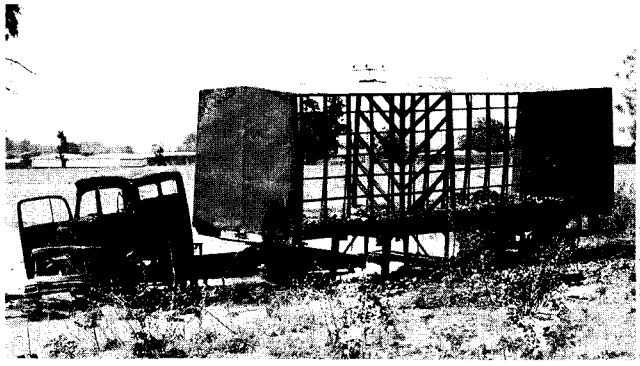
The Talibanization of West Africa.

BY PAUL MARSHALL

AFTER SAFIYA HUSEINI was sentenced to death by stoning last October 9 by an Islamic *sharia* court in northern Nigeria, her case drew international attention. The *New York Times Magazine* profiled her, and European members of parliament protested to Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo. When, in March, an appeals court overturned the death sentence on a technicality, much of the world sighed with relief and lost interest in the growth of militant Islam in Africa's most populous country.

But the extremism to which Huseini's case drew attention—she had gone to the police to complain of being raped, then was arrested and tried for adultery—remains a growing threat to human rights in the dozen Nigerian states that have adopted a hard-line interpretation of Islamic law. Especially at risk are women and religious minorities, not to mention democracy and stability in West Africa.

Thus, three days before Huseini's conviction was overturned in Sokoto state, a *sharia* court in neighboring Katsina state condemned Amina Lawal Kurami to be stoned to death for adultery, and another court is considering the same for 18-year-old Hafsatu Abubakar. (This mode of execution, incidentally, involves immobilizing the person to be stoned by first burying her up to her chest.)



Courtesy of Freedom House

A beer truck, destroyed in sharia rioting.

Men are invariably let off for their part in these sexual crimes because *sharia* courts require a higher standard of evidence to convict them. But men face notable brutality for other offenses. In May 2001, an Islamic court ordered the removal of Ahmed Tijjan's left eye after he was found guilty of partially blinding a friend. Another ordered 15-year-old Abubakar Aliyu's hand amputated for stealing. Ahmed Sani, the governor of Zamfara, the first state to introduce this form of *sharia*, told Freedom House that "without amputations there is no *sharia*."

The growth of radical Islam has effects far wider than these draconian punishments. Nigeria is about equally divided between Christians and Muslims, with a small number of animists. If radical Islam is left unchecked, it will continue to provoke widespread inter-religious conflict that, combined with endemic ethnic strife, may fragment the country. This could make the giant of sub-Saharan Africa—a major oil exporter to the United States and a new, struggling democracy—into a haven for Islamism, linked to foreign extremists.

As in much of Africa, family law in Nigeria has long drawn on *sharia*, the body of Islamic law and precedent. But the versions of *sharia* introduced in the last two years are closer to those imposed by the Taliban in Afghanistan or the Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia. Since 1999, Zamfara state has sexually segregated buses, taxis, and many public places, banned alcohol, enforced a dress code on women, and closed non-Muslim schools. Its *hizbah* (religious enforcers) mete out immediate, harsh punishments for "un-Islamic" activities such as questioning Islamic teaching or women's wearing pants.

In some states Muslims are subject to *sharia* even if they prefer civil courts that have protections under Nigeria's bill of rights. Non-Muslims are barred from being judges, prosecutors, and lawyers in the courts to which they may be subject. *Sharia* state governments have destroyed dozens of churches.

Sani told Freedom House that the Koran requires Muslims to kill family members who leave Islam, and indicated that his state will not prosecute such killings. Trying to appeal a *sharia* verdict to one of Nigeria's higher civil courts could be taken as a sign of such apostasy.

The new laws are not subject to

Paul Marshall is a senior fellow at the Center for Religious Freedom at Freedom House, which has just released his book-length report The Talibanization of Nigeria: Sharia Law and Religious Freedom.

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democratic control. Since proponents of the new code say that it is divinely ordained, no constitution or election is allowed to challenge it. Sani says that *sharia* supercedes the Nigerian constitution, and Zamfara's legislative assembly suspended two democratically elected Muslim members because they did not fully support the new laws. Governor Bukar Ibrahim of Yobe, another *sharia* state, said that he was prepared to fight a civil war to preserve it.

The new laws have precipitated riots throughout the country. February 2000 saw the worst violence since Nigeria's civil war 30 years ago. In Kaduna City, whole neighborhoods were destroyed. Police conservatively estimate that 600 people died; human rights groups say as many as 3,000. Perhaps 6,000 have been killed in the last two years in religion-related violence nationwide.

After September 11, some Islamist violence took on a distinctly anti-American tone. In the cities of Jos and Kano, hundreds died in riots in September and October, with Muslims observed waving bin Laden posters and Christians waving American flags. Bin Laden remains a hero in much of the north.

While no evidence has surfaced of al Qaeda operations in Nigeria, the extremism from which it draws support is spreading rapidly, and is encouraged by radical Islamic groups and foreign regimes. Nigerian police say that dozens of Pakistanis have been involved in religious riots, and visiting Pakistani "scholars" have been ejected from the country. Before Zamfara instituted *sharia*, officials from Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Syria, and even Palestinian representatives, visited. Sudan, which has already supplied Chechnya's criminal code, is running training programs for Nigeria's *sharia* judges.

The Nigerian federal government's response has been tentative. Its justice minister has written that the new *sharia* is unconstitutional but has failed to mount a legal challenge.

Nigeria is further proof, if any were needed, that radical Islam is not created or driven by opposition to U.S. policy on Israel. It is an aggressive, worldwide ideological movement with its sights set on Africa and Asia as much as the Middle East. The situation in Nigeria also provides an additional reason for the United States to drop its 30-year practice of downplaying demands for human rights and democracy in Muslim societies. The United States should urge Nigeria to oppose extremist *sharia* vigorously and help it to do so. Even hardheaded realists should see the importance of aiding the country to reform its troubled legal system nationwide and provide education that includes modern knowledge and promotes freedom as an alternative to Islamist schools.

Otherwise this fledgling democracy, regional power, and U.S. ally is bound to face further religious violence. As Nigerian novelist and Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka laments, "The roof is already burning over our head—the prelude to civil war." ♦

It's Not Over Over There

Why we need more ground troops in Afghanistan.

BY FREDERICK KAGAN

THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN is a long way from over. Despite the premature self-congratulation that was common until recent weeks, we haven't won it yet, and our victory or defeat will rest largely on decisions our leaders are making now.

From the beginning of the conflict, the administration has been determined to minimize the use of ground forces. Administration supporters insisted that airpower alone could take down the Taliban and destroy al Qaeda. But the call for ground troops was always based on the expectation that the fall of the Taliban would create a delicate situation in which we would not be in control. That is precisely what has happened.

In the months since the collapse of the Taliban, American and Western forces have largely confined themselves to Kandahar, Kabul, and Bagram airbase and to search-and-destroy missions in the mountains along the Pakistani border. They have established no meaningful presence in other major cities, leaving whole regions of the country in anarchy. The result has been a return to warlordism. Powerful former mujahedeen commanders are setting up their own palatinates and armies, and every day that these developments go unopposed makes the peaceful reunification of the country more difficult. That is why both Afghan leaders and international observers are calling with increasing shrillness for the deployment of tens of thousands of international peacekeepers. The refusal of the administration to consider such a step is ill-advised.

The reason we attacked Afghanistan in the first place was that anarchy, civil war, and Islamic radicalism had created an environment conducive to terrorist planning and training, aimed at attacking the United States and acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The only way to ensure the same thing doesn't happen again is to establish a government in Kabul that can control the country. This cannot be done from the air, and it cannot be done in six months. It requires the long-term deployment of

Frederick Kagan is a military historian and the co-author of While America Sleeps.

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"THE CHILDREN, THE CHURCH AND THE CARDINAL"

Saddened deeply and exhausted, His Eminence, Edward Cardinal Egan, a good and kindly man, in late evening, retreated to a pew just in front of the main altar in the magnificent Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The great entrance doors were closed for the night. Only flickering candles illuminated the holy place.

The Cardinal kneeled. He prayed. Then, he sat back. Tears filled his eyes. Satan's salacious scandal had slithered through the Cathedral's portals. It had dangerously infected his beloved and sacred sanctuary. "What must I do?" he implored his God in heaven.

A voice whispered in his ear. "Go now, alone, to the pond in nearby Central Park. Sit on a bench near that location where children come to sail their homemade boats. An Old Lady will introduce herself to you."

This, the Cardinal did forthwith. The full moon brightened the park and pond. A patrolman warned him, "It's not always safe here this late at night, Sir. Please be careful."

Thankfully having not been recognized, His Eminence simply said, "Thank you, officer. I'll be careful."

Soon, the Cardinal heard the high-pitched notes coming from what seemed to be just an ordinary pipe. Turning toward the sound, he made out an Old Lady, a tall man playing his pipe and a little boy approaching.

Introducing herself, the Old Lady said, "I know who you are, I was told to meet you here. I'm called the Old Lady, who lived in a shoe. And she had so many children she didn't know what to do."

"Oh, of course," exclaimed the Cardinal. "Happy to meet you. Who are your two companions?"

"My tall friend, playing the pipe" the Old Lady replied, "is called the good Pied Piper. The little boy comes from far away up there. You'll soon understand."

The little boy bowed to the Cardinal. He kissed his ring. He held a crackerjack box. A kind of mast protruded from it, not longer than a matchstick. There was a paper sail. "I'm going to launch my boat now, in the pond like all the other children do. Please excuse me," he shouted over his shoulder on the way to the pond to set his tiny vessel adrift.

The Old Lady continued, "Your Eminence, tomorrow send messages to all Catholic schools under your jurisdiction. Instruct those in charge to have all their children gather, the following day, at 10:00am in Columbus Circle. That's not far from your Cathedral. Prepare them for a procession. Request police escorts. The three of us will meet you there. That's enough for now."

The exciting day arrived. Hundreds of children gathered in what open space was available. The good Cardinal stood alone until the Old Lady, the Pied Piper, and the little boy joined him.

The Old Lady said to the Cardinal, "Now call for quiet. Tell the children to line up two abreast in a column. Say that you will lead the way with the three of us in a procession on to Saint Patrick's Cathedral and then inside of it. Once there, you will welcome all of them. We three will take care of the rest."

The long line of children started out. Piping a merry tune, the Pied Piper led the way. Behind him, three abreast, followed the Old Lady, the little boy and the Cardinal. Suddenly, heaven's words came to His Eminence "and a child shall lead you." And that was precisely who walked along beside him.

The happy children frolicked but always in formation, as if on some wonderful new adventure. Traffic stopped. The sidewalks filled with on lookers. Never had there ever been something quite like this. The media, altered, scrambled in droves to cover the joyous scene.

Then, finally, the children, in their hundreds, entered the Cathedral. They settled down quietly in the many empty pews. Next, the Cardinal ascended the pulpit.

"Welcome, dear children," he greeted them. "This is God's house. Therefore, it's your Father's house so it's your house too. For so long as breath is left in me and, for eternity in God, your Father as well, you are always welcome. From this very moment on, we shall both keep you safe from any harm, so help me God!"

Then, the Old Lady spoke from the pulpit, "Children, I'm the Old Lady who lived in a shoe. She had so many children; she didn't know what to do. But I know now. My shoe may be filled to overflowing. No church will ever be so full that there's ever not enough room for anyone of you."

Then came the good Pied Piper speaking from the elevated pulpit. "Long ago," he said, "when another played his pipe, countless children followed him. This time, it is me leading you to this holy place. Your home is where your heart is. This is that place you will always find." He played a short and happy tune. The children clapped and cheered.

Finally, the little boy climbed the pulpit from which he could plainly be seen. "I'm just like anyone of you," he began. "My Father's house has many mansions, which are really churches everywhere. My Father is your Father too. He loves you as much as he loves me. If you're tired, sad, lonely, don't know where to go or which way to turn, don't knock on your Father's door. Simply turn the knob and walk right in."

A little later as the organ played a recessional, the children filed outside. Fifth Avenue, in front of the Cathedrals, was crammed with thousands. Space was made for the Cardinal, the Old Lady, the little boy, and the Pied Piper who were the last to exit.

With the vast crowd looking on, the Cardinal, his face now, once again noticeably, radiant with joy and peace, prepared to thank the other three and send them happily on their way. This, he did, for all to see.

A path was cleared for the Old Lady, the Pied Piper, and the little boy to make their departure. What followed is, to this day, not really understood. Once in the clear, the three turned around to wave farewell. They turned around again. Suddenly, they disappeared as if into thin air.

A TV reporter cornered the Cardinal. He asked, "Just who were those three, your Eminence? Millions of us want to know."

The Cardinal told him and told the world. "It's not for me to say. God moves in mysterious ways. Thanks be to God!"

The good Cardinal climbed back up the steps. The great Cathedral doors swung open for him. Inside, he smiled as if God had helped wash away the ugly stain of scandal. Once again, the Cathedral was lit up and warmed by a thousand fresh candles in place of the burned out and dying ones that once made only Satan smile.

Along his way back to his office, the good and unselfish Cardinal kneeled in front of the Lady Chapel. He was reminded of his God's words, "Suffer little children to come unto me." That wasn't all.

In the same breath, he was also reminded of his God's other words, "For this is my son, in whom I am well pleased." He did not then or ever think the words were meant for him. But, of course, they were.

Anyone's God does not ever close the door and forsake the faithful. Everyone's God leaves the door wide open with welcome arms, anxious to embrace the distressed and send them on their way again to useful purpose.

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Among the Bourgeoisophobes

Why the Europeans and Arabs, each in their own way, hate America and Israel.

By David Brooks

Around 1830, a group of French artists and intellectuals looked around and noticed that people who were their spiritual inferiors were running the world. Suddenly a large crowd of merchants, managers, and traders were making lots of money, living in the big houses, and holding the key posts. They had none of the high style of the aristocracy, or even the earthy integrity of the peasants. Instead, they were gross. They were vulgar materialists, shallow conformists, and self-absorbed philistines, who half the time failed even to acknowledge their moral and spiritual inferiority to the artists and intellectuals. What's more, it was their very mediocrity that accounted for their success. Through some screw-up in the great scheme of the universe, their narrow-minded greed had brought them vast wealth, unstoppable power, and growing social prestige.

Naturally, the artists and intellectuals were outraged. Hatred of the bourgeoisie became the official emotion of the French intelligentsia. Stendhal said traders and merchants made him want to "weep and vomit at the same time." Flaubert thought they were "plodding and avaricious." Hatred of the bourgeoisie, he wrote, "is the beginning of all virtue." He signed his letters "Bourgeoisophobus" to show how much he despised "stupid grocers and their ilk."

Of all the great creeds of the 19th century, pretty much the only one still thriving is this one, bourgeoisophobia. Marxism is dead. Freudianism is dead. Social Darwinism is dead, along with all those theories about racial purity that grew up around it. But the emotions and reactions that Flaubert, Stendhal, and all the others articulated in the 1830s are still with us, bigger than ever. In fact, bourgeoisophobia, which has flowered variously and spread to places as diverse as Baghdad, Ramallah, and Beijing, is the major reactionary creed of our age.

This is because today, in much of the world's eyes, two peoples—the Americans and the Jews—have emerged as the great exemplars of undeserved success. Americans and Israelis, in this view, are the money-mad molochs of the earth, the vulgarizers of morals, corrupters of culture, and proselytizers of idolatrous values. These two nations, it is said, practice conquest capitalism, overrunning poorer nations and exploiting weaker neighbors in their endless desire for more and more. These two peoples, the Americans and the Jews, in the view of the bourgeoisophobes, thrive precisely because they are spiritually stunted. It is their obliviousness to the holy things in life, their feverish energy, their injustice, their shallow pursuit of power and gain, that allow them to build fortunes, construct weapons, and play the role of hyperpower.

And so just as the French intellectuals of the 1830s rose up to despise the traders and bankers, certain people today rise up to shock, humiliate, and dream of destroying America and Israel. Today's bourgeoisophobes burn with the same sense of unjust inferiority. They experience the same humiliation because there is nothing they can do to thwart the growing might of their enemies. They rage and rage. Only today's bourgeoisophobes are not just artists and intellectuals. They are as likely to be terrorists and suicide bombers. They teach in madrassas, where they are careful not to instruct their students in the sort of practical knowledge that dominates bourgeois schools. They are Muslim clerics who incite hatred and violence. They are erudite Europeans who burn with humiliation because they know, deep down, that both America and Israel possess a vitality and heroism that their nations once had but no longer do.

Today the battle lines are forming. The dispute over Palestine, which was once a local conflict about land, has been transformed into a great cultural showdown. The

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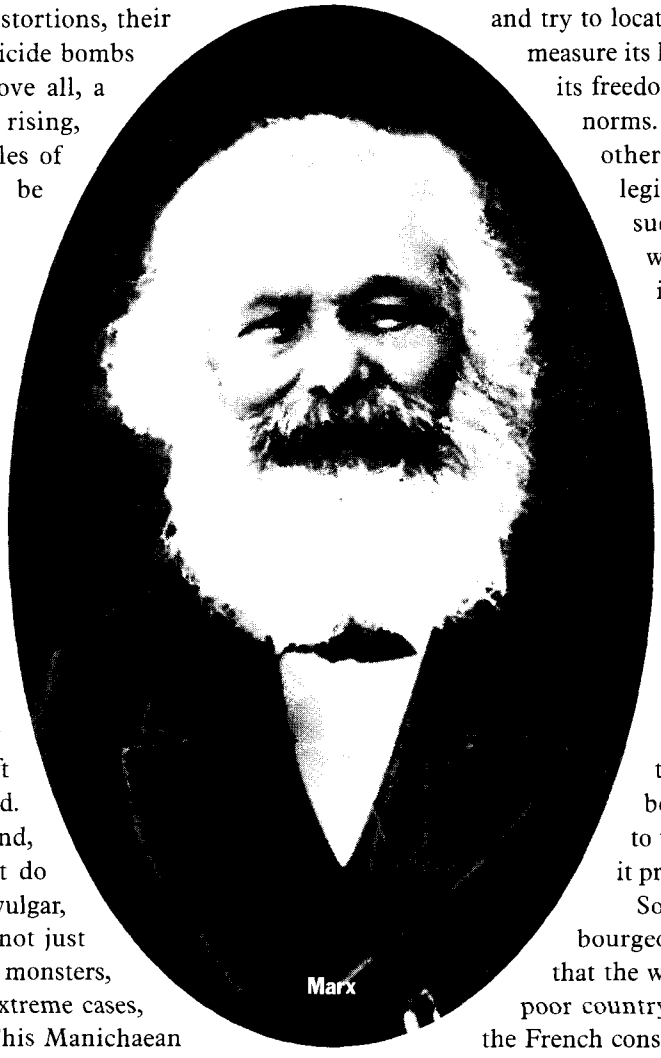
vast array of bourgeoisophobes—Yasser Arafat's guerrilla socialists, Hamas's Islamic fundamentalists, José Bové's anti-globalist leftists, America's anti-colonial multiculturalists, and the BBC's Oxbridge mediacrats—focus their diverse rages and resentments on this one conflict.

The bourgeoisophobes have no politburo. There is no bourgeoisophobe central command. They have no plausible strategy for victory. They have only their nihilistic rage, their envy mixed with snobbery, their snide remarks, their newspaper distortions, their conspiracy theories, their suicide bombs and terror attacks—and above all, a burning sense that the rising, vibrant, and powerful peoples of America and Israel must be humiliated and brought low.


Marx

Bourgeoisophobia is really a hatred of success. It is a hatred held by people who feel they are spiritually superior but who find themselves economically, politically, and socially outranked. They conclude that the world is diseased, that it rewards the wrong values, the wrong people, and the wrong abilities. They become cynical if they are soft inside, violent if they are hard. In the bourgeoisophobe's mind, the people and nations that do succeed are not just slightly vulgar, not just over-compensated, not just undeservedly lucky. They are monsters, non-human beasts who, in extreme cases, can be blamelessly killed. This Manichaean divide between the successful, who are hideous, and the bourgeoisophobes, who are spiritually pristine, was established early in the emergence of the creed. The early 19th-century German poet Hölderlin couldn't just ignore the merchant bourgeoisie; he had to declare the middle classes "deeply incapable of every divine emotion." In other words, scarcely human.

Hölderlin's countryman Werner Sombart later wrote a quintessential bourgeoisophobe text called "Traders and Heroes," in which he argued that there are two basic human types: "The trader approaches life with the question, what can you give me? . . . The hero approaches life with the question what can I give you?" The trader, then, is the selfish capitalist who lives a meager, artificial life amidst "pocket-watches, newspapers, umbrellas, books, sewage disposal, politics." The hero is the total man, who is selfless, vital, spiritual, and free. An honest person might ascribe another's success to a superior work ethic, self-discipline, or luck—just being in the right place at the right time and possessing the right skills. A normal person might look at a rich and powerful country and try to locate the source of its vitality, to measure its human and natural resources, its freedom, its institutions and social norms. But for the bourgeoisophobe, other people's success is never legitimate or deserved. To him, success comes to those who worship the golden calf, the idol, the Satanic corrupter, gold.

When bourgeoisophobes describe their enemies, they almost always portray them as money-mad, as crazed commercialists. And this vulgar materialism, in their view, has not only corrupted the soul of the bourgeoisie, but through them threatens to debase civilization itself and the whole world. It threatens, in the words of the supreme bourgeoisophobe, Karl Marx, to take all that is holy and make it profane.

Some of the more pessimistic bourgeoisophobes come to believe that the worst is already at hand. "Our poor country lies in Roman decadence," the French conservative poet Arthur de Gobineau lamented in 1840. "We are without fiber or moral energy. I no longer believe in anything. . . . MONEY HAS KILLED EVERYTHING." (A great place to read bourgeoisophobe writing is Arthur Herman's *The Idea of Decline in Western History*. Bourgeoisophobia is not Herman's theme, but his book does such a magnificent job of surveying two centuries of pessimistic thought that most of the key bourgeoisophobes are quoted.)

And once the bourgeoisophobes had experienced the basic spasm of reaction, they soon settled on the Americans and Jews as two of the chief objects of their ire. Because, as Henry Steele Commager once noted, no

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country in the world ever succeeded like America, and everybody knew it. And no people in the European experience ever achieved such sustained success as the Jews.

So the Jews were quickly established in the bourgeoisophobe imagination as the ultimate commercial people. They were the bankers, the traders, the soulless and sharp dealmakers who crawled through the cellars of honest and noble cultures and infected them with their habits and practices. The 19th-century Teutonic philosopher Houston Chamberlain said of the Jews that "their existence is a crime against the holy laws of life." The Jewish religion, he said, is "rigid," "scanty," and "sterile."

The American bourgeoisophobe family, the Adamses, contained more than its share of anti-Semites. Brooks Adams lamented that "England is as much governed by the Jews of Berlin, Paris and New York as the native growth." Adams compared the Jews to a vast syndicate and declared simply, "They control the world." Henry Adams protested against the interlocked power of "Wall Street, State Street and Jerusalem." Later, the English historian Arnold Toynbee argued that the Jews, with their "consummate virtuosity in commerce and finance," had infected Western civilization with a crass materialism. Through their arrogance and viciousness, they were responsible for capitalism, godless communism, and the Holocaust, and so had contributed to Europe's decline.

It's actually amazing how early America, too, was stereotyped as a money-grubbing commercial land and Americans a money-grubbing people. François La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, who traveled in the United States in the 1790s, declared, "The desire for riches is their ruling passion." In 1805, a British visitor observed, "All men there make [money] their pursuit." "Gain! Gain! Gain! Gain! Gain!" is how the English philosopher Morris Birbeck summarized the American spirit a few years later. In 1823 William Faux wrote that "two selfish gods, pleasure and gain, enslave the Americans." Fourteen years after that, the disillusioned Russian writer Mikhail Pogodin lamented, "America, on which our contemporaries have pinned their hopes for a time, has meanwhile clearly revealed the vices of her illegitimate birth. She is not a state, but rather a trading company."

Each wave of foreign observers reinforced the prejudice. Charles Dickens described a country of uncouth vulgarians frantically chasing, as he first put it, "the almighty dollar." Oswald Spengler worried that Germany would devolve into "soulless America," with its worship of "technical skill, money and an eye for facts." Matthew Arnold worried that global forces would Americanize England. "They will rule [Britain] by their energy but they will deteriorate it by their low ideas and want of culture." By 1904, people around the world were worrying about American cultural hegemony. In that year the German writer Paul Dehns wrote an influential essay called "The Americanization of the World." "What is Americanization?" Dehns asked. "Americanization in its widest sense, including the societal and political, means the uninterrupted, exclusive, and relentless striving after gain, riches and influence."

In the 20th century the Americans' aggressive commercialism was symbolized by the unstoppable spread of jeans, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Disney, and Microsoft. America, in the bourgeoisophobes' eyes, is the land of Bart Simpson, boy bands, boob jobs, and *Baywatch*. The land of money and guns. Of insincere smiles and love handles. So by the time Osama bin Laden came along, hatred of America was well rehearsed, a finished product just waiting for him to pick it up. In 1998 bin Laden declared war on "the crusader-Jewish alliance, led by the United States and Israel." He added, "Since I was a boy I have been at war with and harboring hatred towards the Americans." He was only echoing Toynbee, who 30 years earlier said, "The United States and Israel must be today the two most dangerous of the 125 sovereign states among which the land surface of this planet is at present partitioned."

For the bourgeoisophobe, then, the question becomes, how does one confront this menace? And on this, the bourgeoisophobes split into two schools. One, which might be called the brutalist school, seeks to reclaim the raw, masculine vitality that still lies buried at the virile heart of human nature. The other, which might be called the ethereal school, holds that a creative minority can rise above prosaic bourgeois life into a realm of contemplation, feeling, art, sensibility, and spiritual grace.

The brutalist school started in Germany, more or less with Nietzsche. In *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche has a character declare that he is turning his back on the whole world of degenerate "flea-beetles," the ones who spend their lives "higgling and haggling for power with the rabble." Salvation instead is found in the will to power. The *Übermensch* possesses force of will. He can thus be "a mighty . . . hammer" who will smash, "break and remove degenerate and decaying races to make way for a new order of life."

The brutalists urged sons—"the explosive ones"—to revolt against their fathers. They romanticized insanity as a rebellion against convention. They looked back nostalgically to the crude, savage, and proud men of Homeric legend, Germanic history, and Norse myth. They

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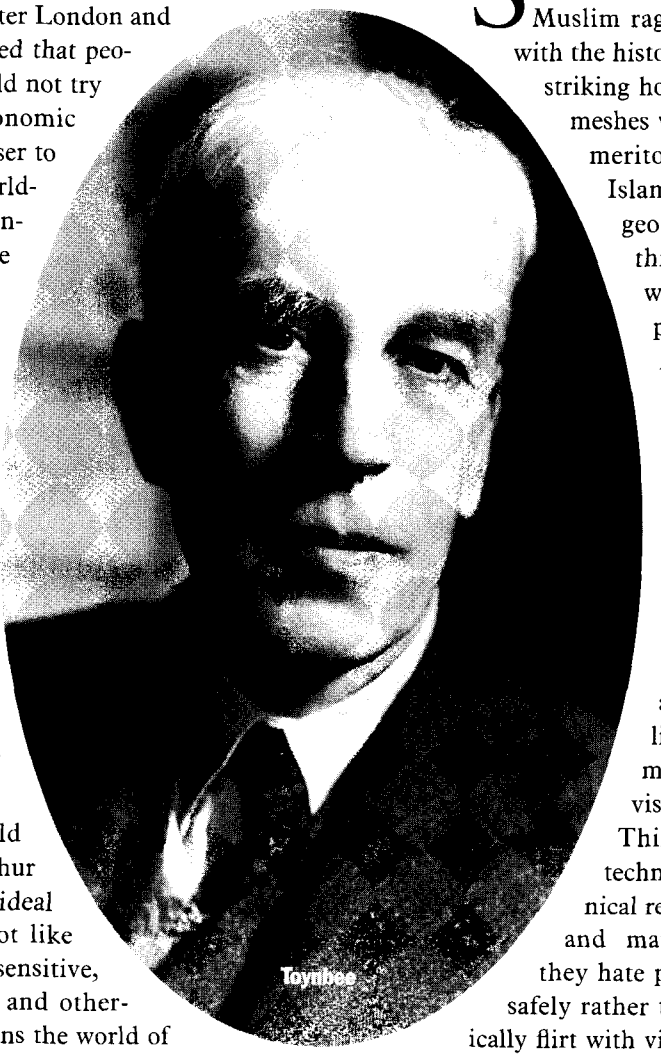
looked for another such hero to emerge today, a virile warrior who would demolish the stale encrustations of an overcivilized world and revive the raw energy of the species. "We do not need ideologues anymore," Oswald Spengler argued, "we need hardness, we need fearless skepticism, we need a class of socialist master men." This, of course, was the path that led to Mussolini, Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and bin Laden.

Meanwhile, the ethereal bourgeoisophobes were emerging in Paris and later London and the United States. They argued that people in decaying cultures should not try to reclaim their former economic and military power. It was wiser to accept the decline of their worldly power and embrace the contemplative virtues. Toynbee acknowledged that Europe's virile, self-assertive days were over. Europeans would have to choose between spending their money on comfortable welfare states and spending it on militaristic "war-making states." They could not afford both. He predicted (in 1926) that they would choose welfare states—and be forced to accept being "dwarfed by the overseas world which [Europe] herself had called into existence."


Toynbee

The Europeans should therefore turn inward. As Arthur Herman notes, the human ideal Toynbee described looks a lot like Toynbee himself: "diffident, sensitive, religious in a contemplative and otherworldly sense, a man who shuns the world of violence and barbarism to pursue the 'etherealization' of himself and society." Toynbee denounced patriotism, commercial striving, and the martial spirit. Artists and intellectuals, the "creative minority," should lead until "the majority is drilled into following the minority's lead mechanically."

Though Toynbee despised the United States, his books sold well here. His lecture tours were lucrative, and his picture was on the cover of *Time* magazine. When Hitler came along, Toynbee was an enthusiastic appeaser. He met Hitler in 1936 and came away deeply impressed (the two men hated some of the same things). He told his countrymen that Hitler sincerely desired peace. For, just as the brutalist school of bourgeoisophobia led to Hitler and Saddam, the ethereal school led to Neville Chamberlain and some of the European reaction to George Bush's Axis of Evil.

Since September 11, there has been a great deal of analysis of the roots of Muslim rage. But to anybody familiar with the history of bourgeoisophobia, it is striking how comfortably Muslim rage meshes with traditional rage against meritocratic capitalism. The Islamist fanatic and the bourgeoisophobe hate the same things. They use the same words, they utter the same protests. In an essay in the *New York Review of Books* called "Occidentalism," Avishai Margalit and Ian Buruma listed the traits that enrage al Qaeda and other Third World anti-Americans and anti-Westerners. First, they hate the city. Cities stand for commerce, mixed populations, artistic freedom, and sexual license. Second, they hate the mass media: advertising, television, pop music, and videos. Third, they hate science and technology—the progress of technical reason, mechanical efficiency, and material know-how. Fourth, they hate prudence, the desire to live safely rather than court death and heroically flirt with violence. Fifth, they hate liberty, the freedom extended even to mediocre people. Sixth, they despise the emancipation of women. As Margalit and Buruma note, "Female emancipation leads to bourgeois decadence." Women are supposed to stay home and breed heroic men. When women go out into the world, they deprive men of their manhood and weaken their virility.

If you put these six traits together, you have pretty much the pillars of meritocratic capitalist society, practiced most assertively in countries like America and Israel. Contemporary Muslim rage is further inflamed by two additional passions. One is a sense of sexual shame.

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A rite of passage for any bourgeoisophobe of this type is the youthful trip to America or to the West, where the writer is nearly seduced by the vulgar hedonism of capitalist life, but heroically spurns it. Sayyid Qutb, who is one of the intellectual heroes of the Islamic extremists, toured America between 1948 and 1950. He found a world of jazz, football, movies, cars, and people obsessed with lawn maintenance. It was a land, he wrote, "hollow and full of contradictions, defects and evils." At one point Qutb found himself at a church social. The disc jockey put on "Baby, It's Cold Outside." As Qutb wrote, "The dancing intensified. . . . The hall swarmed with legs. . . . Arms circled arms, lips met lips, chests met chests, and the atmosphere was full of love." This was at a church social. You can imagine how the September 11 al Qaeda hijackers must have felt during the visit they made to a Florida strip club shortly before going off to their purifying martyrdom.

The second inflaming passion is humiliation—humiliation caused by the fact that in the 1960s and 1970s, many Arab and Muslim nations tried to join this bourgeois world. They tried to modernize, and they failed. Some Arab countries continue to pursue the low and dirty modernizing path, continue to ape the sordid commercialists and even to accept the presence of American troops on Arabian soil. And this drives the hard-core Islamic bourgeoisophobes to even higher states of rage. As bin Laden himself notably put it, protesting the presence of American troops on Saudi land: "By God, Muslim women refuse to be defended by these American and Jewish prostitutes." The Islamist response to humiliation has been worship of the Muslim man of force. Islamist extremists romanticize the brutal warrior, just as the German bourgeoisophobes did, only the Islamists wear robes and clutch Korans. Like European and Japanese brutalists before them, the Islamists celebrate violence and build a cult of suicide and death. "The Americans love Pepsi-Cola, we love death," declared al Qaeda's Mualana Inyadullah after September 11. Jews "love life more than any other people, and they prefer not to die," declared Hamas official Ismail Haniya on March 28 amidst a rash of suicide bombings.

The brutalist bourgeoisophobia of the Islamic extremists is pretty straightforward. The attitudes of European etherealists are quite a bit more complicated. Europeans, of course, are bourgeois themselves, even more so in some ways than Americans and Israelis. What they distrust about America and Israel is that these countries represent a particularly aggressive and, to them, unbalanced strain of bourgeois ambition. No European would ever acknowledge the category, but America and Israel are heroic bourgeois nations. The Israelis are driven by passionate Zionism to build their homeland and make it rich and powerful. Americans are driven by our Puritan sense of calling, the deeply held belief that we Americans have a special mission to spread our way of life around the globe. It is precisely this heroic element of ordinary life that Europeans lack and distrust.

So the Europeans are all ambivalence. The British historian J.H. Plumb once declared that he loved America (and he was indeed a great defender of the United States), but even his admiration for the country "was entangled with anger, anxiety and at times flashes of hate." In his infuriatingly condescending and ultimately appreciative portrait *America*, the French modernist Jean Baudrillard wrote, "America is powerful and original; America is violent and abominable. We should not seek to deny either of these aspects, nor reconcile them."

But Europeans do seek to deny them—because they simply can't remember what it's like to be imperially confident, to feel the forces of history blowing at one's back, to have heroic and even eschatological aspirations. Their passions have been quieted. Their intellectual guides have taught them that business is ignoble and striving is vulgar. Their history has caused them to renounce military valor (good thing, too) and to regard their own relative decline as a sign of greater maturity and wisdom. The European Union has a larger population than the United States, and a larger GDP—and its political class has tried to construct an institutional architecture that will enable it to rival America. But the imperial confidence is gone, along with the youthful sense of limitless possibility and the unselfconscious embrace of ordinary striving.

So their internal engine is calibrated differently. They look with disdain upon our work ethic (the average American works 350 hours a year—nearly nine weeks—longer than the average European). They look with disdain upon what they see as our lack of social services, our relatively small welfare state, which rewards mobility and effort but less gracefully cushions misfortune. They look with distaste upon our commercial culture, which favors the consumer but does not ease the rigors of competition for producers. And they look with fear upon our popular culture, which like some relentless machine seems designed to crush the local cultures that stand in its way.

To European bourgeoisophobes, America is the radioactive core of what Ignacio Ramonet, editor and publisher of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, recently called "The Other Axis of Evil" in a front-page essay. It controls the IMF and the World Bank, the institutions that reward the rich and punish the poor, Ramonet claimed. Ameri-

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can institutions such as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Cato Institute promulgate the ideology that justifies exploitation, he continued. The American military provides the muscle to force-feed economic liberalism to the world.

They look at us uncomprehendingly when our leaders declare a global assault on terror and evil. They see us as a mindless Rambo, a Mike Tyson with rippling muscles and no brain. Where the Islamists see us as a decadent slut, the European etherealists see us as a gun-slinging cowboy. The Islamists think we are too spoiled and comfortable, the Europeans think we are too violent and impulsive. Each side's view of us is a mix of Hollywood images (Marilyn Monroe for the Islamists, John Wayne for the Europeans), mass-media distortions, envy-driven stereotypes, and self-justifying delusions. But each side's vision springs from a deeper bourgeoisophobia—the prejudice that people who succeed in worldly affairs must be morally and intellectually backward. This article of faith governs the way even many sophisticated Europeans and Muslims react to us.

Complexity is catnip to the etherealized bourgeoisophobe. It paralyzes brute action, and justifies subtle gestures.

After September 11, there was a widespread fear in Europe and in certain American circles that the United States would lash out violently and pointlessly. In fact, the United States has never behaved this way. It was slow to respond to Pearl Harbor; it was too timid in its responses to the USS *Cole* and other attacks. But to many Europeans, who must believe in our mindless immaturity in order to look themselves in the mirror each morning, it was obvious that the United States would shoot first and think afterwards.

These Europeans have assigned themselves the self-flattering role of being Athens to our Rome. That's what all the talk about coalition-building is about; the mindless American car dealer with the big guns should allow himself to be guided by the thoughtful European statesman, who is better able to think through the unintended consequences of any action, and to understand the darker complexities. Much European commentary about America since September 11 has had a zoological tone. The American beast did not know that he was vulnerable to attack (we Europeans have long understood this). The American was traumatized by this discovery. The American was overcompensating with an arms build-up that was pointless since, with his *gigantisme militaire*, he already had more weapons than he could ever need.

Furthermore, the American doesn't see the deeper causes of terrorism, the poverty, the hopelessness. America should really be spending more money on foreign aid (it's interesting that Europeans, who are supposed to be less materialistic than we are, inevitably think more money can solve the world's problems, while Americans tend to point to religion or ideas).

"What America never takes a moment to consider is that, despite its mightiness, it is a young country with much to learn. It had no real direct experience of the First and Second World Wars," declared a writer in the *New Statesman*, echoing a sentiment that one heard across the Continent as well. America, many Europeans feel, has no experience with the Red Brigades, the IRA, the Basque terrorists. Americans have no experience with Afghanistan. The dim boobies have no idea what sort of instability they are about to cause. They will go marching off as they always do, naively confident of themselves, yet inevitably unaware of the harm they shall do. Much of the reaction, in short, has been straight out of Graham Greene's novel *The Quiet American*. The hero of that book, Alden Pyle, is a well-intentioned, naive, earnest manchild who dreams of spreading democracy but only stirs up chaos. "I never knew a man who had better motives for all the trouble he caused," one of the characters says about him. Much of the European intellectual response to the American war has less to do with actual evidence than with figures from literature and the mass media. Sometimes you get the impression that the only people who took the images of Rambo, the Lone Ranger, and Superman seriously were the European bourgeoisophobes who needed clichés to hate.

When the etherealized bourgeoisophobe goes to practice politics, he instinctively dons the pinstripes of the diplomat. Diplomacy fits his temperament. It demands subtlety instead of clarity, self-control instead of power, patience instead of energy, nuance instead of restlessness. Diplomacy is highly formal, highly elitist, highly civilized. Most of all, it is complex. Complexity is catnip to the etherealized bourgeoisophobe. It paralyzes brute action, and justifies subtle and basically immobile gestures, calibrations, and modalities. Bourgeoisophobes have a simple-minded faith that whatever the problem is, the solution requires complexity. Any decisive effort to change the status quo—to topple Saddam, to give up on Arafat, to foment democracy in the Arab world—will only make things worse.

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We Americans have our own bourgeoisophobes, of course. If I pulled from my shelves all the books about the moral backwardness of the enterprising middle classes, I could stack them to the ceiling. I could start with the works of the Transcendentalists, then move through Dreiser, Mencken, Sherwood Anderson, and Sinclair Lewis. Then we could skim swiftly through all the books that bemoan the moral, cultural, and intellectual vapidity of suburbanites, students, middle managers, and middle Americans: *Babbitt*, *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, *The Souls of Black Folk*, *The Lonely Crowd*, *The Organization Man*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, *The Affluent Society*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Soul on Ice*, *The Culture of Narcissism*, *Habits of the Heart*, *The Closing of the American Mind*, *Earth in the Balance*, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, just about every word ever written by Kevin Phillips and Michael Moore, and just about every novel of the last quarter century, from *Rabbit is Rich* through *The Corrections*. It's a Mississippi flood of pessimism. As Catherine Jurca recently wrote in *White Diaspora: The Suburb and the Twentieth-Century American Novel*, "As a body of work, the suburban novel asserts that one unhappy family is a lot like the next, and there is no such thing as a happy family."

The pessimism falls into several categories. There is straightforward, left-wing bourgeoisophobia from writers who think commercial culture has ravaged our souls. Then there is the right-wing variant that says it has made us spiritually flat, and so turned us into comfort-loving Last Men. Then there is the conservative pessimism that purports to be a defense of the heroic bourgeois culture America embodies while actually showing little faith in it. Writers of this school argue that the solid capitalist values America once possessed have been corrupted by intellectual currents coming out of the universities—as if the meritocratic capitalist virtues were such delicate flowers that they could be dissolved by the acid influence of Paul de Man.

It all adds up to a lot of dark foreboding, and after September 11, it doesn't look that impressive. The events of the past several months have cast doubt on a century of mostly bourgeoisophobe cultural pessimism. Somehow the firemen in New York and the passengers on Flight 93 behaved like heroes even though they no doubt lived in bourgeois homes, liked Oprah, shopped at Wal-Mart, watched MTV, enjoyed their Barcaloungers, and occasionally glanced through *Playboy*. Even more than that, it has become abundantly clear since September 11 that America has ascended to unprecedented economic and military heights, and it really is not easy to explain how a country so corrupt to the core can remain for so long so apparently successful on the surface. If we're so rotten, how can we be so great?

It could be, as the bourgeoisophobes say, that America thrives because it is spiritually stunted. It's hard to know, since most of us lack the soul-o-meter by which the cultural pessimists apparently measure the depth of other people's souls. But we do know that despite the alleged savagery, decadence, and materialism of American life, Americans still continue to react to events in ways that suggest there is more to this country than *Survivor*, *Self* magazine, and T.G.I. Friday's.

Confronted with the events of September 11, Americans have not sought to retreat as soon as possible to the easy comfort of their great-rooms (on the contrary, it's been others around the world who have sought to close the parenthesis on these events). President Bush, a man derided as a typical philistine cowboy, has framed the challenge in the most ambitious possible terms: as a moral confrontation with an Axis of Evil. He has chosen the most arduous course. And the American people have supported him, embraced his vision every step of the way—even the people who fiercely opposed his election.

This is not the predictable reaction of a decadent, commercial people. This is not the reaction you would have predicted if you had based your knowledge of America on the extensive literature of cultural decline. Nor would you have been able to predict the American reaction to recent events in the Middle East, which also differs markedly from the European one. Just as the French anti-globalist activist José Bové, heretofore most famous for smashing up a McDonald's, senses that he has something in common with Yasser Arafat (whom he visited in Ramallah on March 31), most Americans sense that they have something in common with Israel in this fight. Most Americans can see the difference between nihilistic terrorism and a democracy trying fitfully to defend itself. And most Americans seem willing to defend the principles that are at stake here, even in the face of global criticism and obloquy. In this, as in so much else, George Bush reflects the meritocratic capitalist culture of which he is a product. While the rest of the world was lost in a moral fog, going on about the "cycle of violence" as if bombs set themselves off and the language of human agency and moral judgment didn't apply, the Bush administration, by and large, has been clear.

In this and many other aspects of the war on terrorism, the American leaders and the American people have been stubborn and steadfast. Just as the American people patiently persevered through a century of

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Afghanistan—President Bush said Israel's action was "not helpful." When dealing with Arafat, even the foes of terror become inconsistent and incoherent.

The archetypal releaser of Arafat is a leader who has criticized him many times, has shown himself capable of the assertive use of deadly force in other situations, and, like Reagan, Bush, Begin, Sharon, Rabin, and Barak, has criticized others for letting terrorists go free. The typical, last-minute liberator is a reluctant and soon-to-be-regretful redeemer, who has often battled terror. Usually, he is utterly disquieted as he finds himself letting Arafat off, but he feels trapped by some force larger than himself. Something always seems to happen so that the knowledge that it is dangerous to let such men go unpunished is not translated into effective action. It is as though these leaders come under a spell.

This "spell" is part of a dynamic that operates when the evil being confronted is *brazen* and *relentless*, and it occurred when the first President Bush let Saddam Hussein off at the end of the Gulf War. The fact that Bush allowed Saddam to escape a just defeat when he was all but conquered is crucial: The person who decides on the ill-advised release does not act from a position of relative weakness. Neville Chamberlain and the others who released Hitler—another representative of *brazen* evil—at Munich did so before the *Führer* perfected his war machine. It is as though there were an unwritten psychological law that evil at its most shameless—the most barbaric murder of children and civilians, the most outrageous claims and lies—is somehow, in the minute before midnight, to be treated as an exception worthy of reprieve.

In each historical instance, there is of course a political imperative that is cited to justify snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. In Arafat's case, the political imperative has turned out each time to be based on a flawed calculus. In March, U.S. pressure on Israel to loosen its hold on Arafat was justified in the name of shoring up Arab support for Washington's new effort to topple Saddam. That Arab support did not materialize, any more than Oslo's promise had. In fact, Washington's Arab "friends" declared at the Beirut Arab summit that any attack on Iraq was an attack on them. To which Secretary of State Powell replied that Arafat, a man who had boasted of killing the American ambassador and his assistant in Khartoum, was no terrorist.

The student of human nature who seems best to have recognized the importance of this bizarre dynamic, in which a conscientious hero proves unable to finish off a foe he knows to be evil, was none other than Shakespeare. Indeed, the Bard was obsessed with understanding the phenomenon. Hamlet hesitated to bring Claudius to justice, and he paid with his life and the lives of those he loved. But it is in *Richard III* that one can learn most from characters who see evil, yet freeze at the key moment. The principal characters are fully aware of Richard's undeniable evil, yet they let him have his way despite themselves. Richard is the most systematically evil character in all of Shakespeare's plays. "I can smile, and murder while I smile," he says, swearing that he will outdo all the villains of history "and set the murderous Machiavel to school."

The most important thing Richard knows is that while conscience allows us to understand ordinary crimes, it actually blinds us before the most extraordinary ones.

The idea that conscience blinds us, making us less able to oppose evil's most brazen forms, is deeply disturbing, for conscience is the sine qua non of civil society. Conscience is supposed to be the faculty that helps us *become aware* of our effects on others and our motives towards them, notably our baser motives. In Elizabethan English, "conscience" is an equivocal word that can mean either that faculty that allows us to feel guilt or "awareness," as in "consciousness." When Hamlet says, "Conscience does make cowards of us all," he means consciousness, by making us *aware* of the possibility of death, makes us cowardly.

But conscience, designed to ferret out evil within, can also actually narrow our awareness of evil. This happens, according to Freud, because the person with a conscience learns to repress *automatically* his own most destructive inclinations so as not to act on them. He becomes ignorant, for example, of the thrill of evil that a sadist like Richard III feels when he plays God and exercises the freedom to kill whomever he pleases. But the cost of repressing one's most destructive feelings is an inability to understand, without significant effort, those who give these feelings free rein.

This is seen over and over in *Richard III*, especially in Richard's seduction of Lady Anne, whose husband he has murdered, and it is seen over and over in our dealings with terrorists. Richard actually gets Anne to drop her sword when she's about to kill him. Anne, although she knows Richard is evil, cannot see that he has no conscience. She tells him he should hang himself for what he has done. She keeps missing the point. He feels no guilt. Eventually, she marries him, and he murders her.

Conscience, when it is functioning well—automatically and without the intervention of reason, so that we do the right thing without thinking—is not simply rational. It is a force, a blunt instrument before which the conscientious person is guilty until proven innocent. As the preventive agency in the mind, conscience blocks first,

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thinks later. Men like Arafat and Richard know this. That is why both men constantly charge others with crimes—to paralyze them. Both know it doesn't matter whether the charges are false. Richard brazenly accuses Anne of inspiring the murder of her husband, as Arafat accuses the West of causing terrorism.

It is this force inside the psyche of his enemies that the person without a conscience can so effectively enlist as a fifth column. Having himself no such inner force always second-guessing him, he can see it clearly in others—far more clearly than do those who are in its thrall and take each of its charges seriously. Arafat gets endless second chances because the conscience of the West is doing what a conscience does: second-guessing the West's own actions. That is why Arafat is always playing upon the conscience of the West, especially by his endless recourse to "international law" and invocation of "human rights," an utterly brazen ploy coming from a terrorist.

Law, in the democracies, is like a civic conscience, and like conscience, it is the bluntest of instruments. Because law, in democracies, is made by the people, it has their respect. Democratic citizens are prone to the illusory hope that the law can be applied successfully in international affairs between regimes regardless of whether they are democracies or tyrannies, strong or weak. The name for this hope is "international law." But because the law in tyrannies is ultimately the product of one man's whim, a mere vehicle of the preeminent will and power, it cannot restrain the preeminent will and power. Conscientiousness in no way attaches to the law in tyrannies. International agreements with tyrants are meaningless, yet pursuit of such agreements is precisely what the State Department is now endorsing by trying to get Israel to sit at the table with Arafat.

"What is the law?" Saddam Hussein once asked. Then he answered his own question. "The two lines above my signature."

When a terrorist such as Arafat or bin Laden uses bombs as well as language, his goal is to weaken the society he targets by manipulating not just fear but also conscience. He seeks to create a fifth column within each individual, sympathetic to his ideals, and a fifth column within the society, an anti-self-defense movement that will righteously lobby the government to open the gates, so that the terrorist can destroy his target with ease. But the mechanism by which societies succumb *must* be in large part unconscious. After all, few can face themselves if they say, "I am succumbing to fear."

The terrorist therefore must persuade his victims that they are "doing the right thing" by submitting to fear. To do so, the terrorist needs to recruit or take over each victim's conscience and *change* it. This happens in stages.

Terror does not work simply by killing: It is malignantly theatrical. Terror aims not only to maim its immediate victims but also to induce a second-hand trauma in its audience, to change them against their will. The core tactic of terrorism is the use of random violence on the target population's home turf. This instills a sense that one can never leave the field of battle, because the field of battle is one's home. The genius of terrorism is that it uses infrequent, random violence to create a sense that terror is omnipresent.

During the 1970s, when planes were frequently hijacked and people kidnapped, a bizarre phenomenon occurred. Consciences were hijacked too. People who had been held at gunpoint and forced to beg for their lives, dependent on their captors for their next breath, emerged to describe those captors as *just* people who treated them well. Former hostages righteously lectured their own governments on the need to support the terrorists' demands. Unremitting terror gave rise to an almost psychotic wishful thinking, which recast the terrorists as good people, nay, even deliverers.

The psychological mechanism involved is called "identification with the aggressor" and was first described by Anna Freud. When this identification occurs, it is as though the terrorist implants his own ideals and moral code inside his victim's conscience.

The paradigmatic example of this occurred in Stockholm in 1973, when four tellers were held at gunpoint for 131 hours in a bank vault. Soon the captives were expressing more fear of the police who were trying to rescue them than of their captors. One prisoner, in a phone call to the Swedish prime minister, Olaf Palme, said, "The robbers are protecting us from the police." After the tellers were released, they expressed no hatred for their captors, and even said they were emotionally indebted to them. Throughout the seventies, the Stockholm Syndrome was demonstrated over and over. Americans captured by terrorists in Lebanon emerged from captivity praising the same Arab terrorists who had murdered their fellows. Patty Hearst, kidnapped in California by the Symbionese Liberation Army, did the same.

The Stockholm Syndrome is not a conscious attempt to ingratiate oneself with one's captors, but an automatic emotional response, seen in many, though not all, captives. With the help of TV, terrorism creates what one might call a "Second-hand Stockholm Syndrome" in the body politic. The goal is to make the target population fall back on wishful thinking, and say, "Maybe if we listen to their demands, they will stop. Maybe the problem is how we are handling the crisis. Maybe we are being too

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forceful. Maybe they can be reasoned with. Maybe we should hold our fire and give peace a chance." The citizenry becomes progressively more passive and confused and willing to appease. This confusion is manifest whenever pundits who are apologists for terror speak of terrorist violence as caused not by the perpetrators, but by some abstract "cycle of violence," suggesting a moral equivalence between the terrorist and his victims and blotting out the reality of barbarism and human psychopathy. How much nicer to live in a world of abstractions than of Richards, Arafats, Saddams, and bin Ladens.

Like Richard, the terrorist is brazen and relentless. America is new to terror on its home soil, and has yet to see relentlessness in action. It is societies such as Israel, targets of sustained terror campaigns, that are most susceptible to the Second-hand Stockholm Syndrome.

Israel clearly had a bad case throughout Oslo. This is the period when the Israeli left rewrote Israeli textbooks, dropping most references to the Holocaust and its role in the creation of the state, to the Arab armies' attacks of 1948, 1967, and 1973, to the utter failure of Western liberal democracies such as France to help save their Jews (which became a major justification for Zionism), and placing a Palestinianocentric view of events before Israeli teenagers who would soon have to serve in the army. While Shimon Peres was arguing in *The New Middle East* (a place which would have no anti-Semitism) that there would be no need for a Jewish state, Israeli intellectuals like the novelist David Grossman were accepting the aggressor's notion of Jewish self-defense as evil:

> The Jews living in Israel are now being asked not only to give up on geographical territories. We must also implement a "redeployment"—or even a complete withdrawal—from entire regions in our soul. . . . Slowly, over long years, we will discover that we are beginning to give them up: . . . Giving up on power as a value. On the army itself as a value. . . . On "It is good to die for one's country," on "The best to the air force," . . . and on "After me" [the doctrine that commanding officers lead their troops into danger situations].

The repeated message of that short incantational passage? Israel, drop your sword.

Terrorists can work through language, as did Richard until he had access to violence, or through violence alone. What makes Arafat's career in terror so remarkable is that when he has had limited access to violence, he has been able to use the very means Richard did to convince his enemies not to run him through.

Arafat has been able to paint himself and the Palestinian people as victims because, lacking a conscience, he could glibly encourage Palestinian children to stand as human shields for his snipers. Fighting such an enemy so pricked the conscience of Israel that many Israelis felt they could not live with themselves—even though they knew that Arafat was manipulating them. This was another reason the Israelis ignored common sense, and decided to give in to the Oslo illusion that Arafat could be trusted.

It is interesting that the person who finally defeats Richard III in Shakespeare's play, Richmond, is the one key character who never talks to Richard or gives him a hearing, and thus never comes under his spell. To talk to Arafat, which is what all pundits say must be done to bring peace to the Middle East, is precisely the wrong move, for there is no dialogue with a man without a conscience. Another wrong move is the game of decriminalizing Arafat. By refusing to punish him for horrendous crimes, as a serious nation would, Israel leaves the world, the Arabs, and itself with the sense that maybe his crimes can be justified, and its own attempts to restrain him from further criminal acts are criminal excesses in themselves. Israel would do better to relentlessly show the world pictures of Arafat's victims, including the American ambassador he assassinated.

Not all criminals are equally brazen. Arafat seems to have the power to neutralize the very foes who see him as most evil, perhaps because they, by virtue of seeing him as virtually the devil incarnate, attribute to him a kind supernatural indestructibility. Such superstition has made many who are far more powerful than Arafat hesitate to end his career. He has effectively used his own brazenness to convince the world that bringing him to justice would be a catastrophe, creating more Arafats by making him a martyr (as though the Middle East lacked for martyrs now).

Spooked, America is unwilling to allow Israel to end Arafat's reign of terror. Washington has retreated into approaching him with a kind of primitive behavior-therapy that says, "If he renounces terror" or "If he controls terror," then we will talk to him. It is as though all that matters is to get him to say the right words, never mind his intentions; as if no distinction need be drawn between his strategic goal—the destruction of Israel—and a tactical willingness to say he opposes terror.

Arafat has discovered, as Shakespeare understood, that the more brazen and relentless one's acts of brutality, the more likely it is that one will be allowed a second chance, and find even powerful men of conscience coming to one's door offering to forget, to forgive, and to give forgiveness a bad name. ♦

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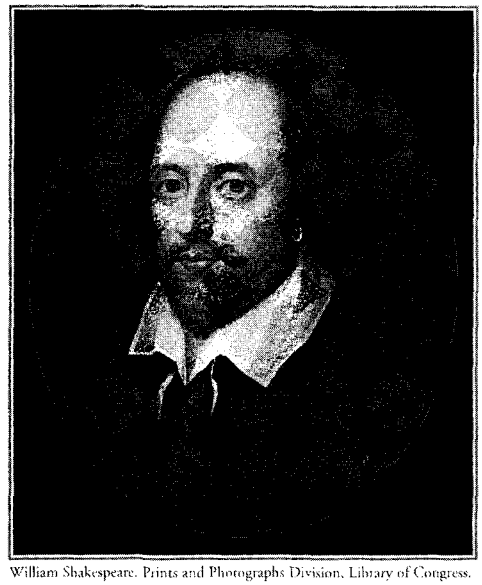

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The Outsider

John Steinbeck at 100

By Bill Croke

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What is John Steinbeck's place in American literary history? This year marks the centenary of his birth—the fortieth anniversary of his contentious 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature—and still we're not sure what to do with him. Certainly, his three great contemporaries overshadow him. Ernest Hemingway had the twentieth century's most distinctive voice, and Steinbeck could never compete with it. Neither could he match F. Scott Fitzgerald's gleaming prose or William Faulkner's insights into character.

In the next rank of twentieth-century American novelists are names like Thomas Wolfe, Theodore Dreiser, and Sinclair Lewis, but Steinbeck doesn't quite seem to belong with them, either—nor at the next rank down, with writers like John Dos Passos. He was often no better than they were; occasionally he was a great deal worse—as anyone who's read his *Sweet Thursday* (1954) knows. And yet, we forget, for all his mainstream success, how *different* Steinbeck was. His real place is among the outsiders—somewhere below Willa Cather and above Jack London in the set of untraditional authors who imposed themselves and their concerns on the American consciousness by the sheer force of their ambition, their will, and their storytelling ability.

Coming of age in remote Northern California, Steinbeck was wholly untouched by modernism. He was separated not only geographically but culturally from the other noteworthy writers of his generation. Too young to serve in World War I, he traveled to Europe for the first time only in the late 1930s. At the time of his birth in Salinas on February 27, 1902, California was just fifty years past statehood, an ethnic stew of white professionals, businessmen and landowners, Hispanic farm workers, and the hustling Chinese immigrants who dominated the service economy.

Steinbeck had a comfortable middle-class childhood in Salinas ("Lettuceberg," he later contemptuously called it). His father was a failed store owner who went on to be the Monterey County treasurer. His mother, a former school teacher, encouraged her son and his two older sisters in the classics of Victorian reading: the Bible, Shakespeare, John Bunyan, Sir Walter Scott, and Robert Louis Stevenson—with Twain and London to follow. Steinbeck especially devoured Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. He later said "a passionate love for the English language opened to me from this one book."

In high school he was big and restive and sometimes a disciplinary problem—this was a defensive response to what one of his biographers, Thomas Kiernan, called his "jug-eared homeliness." This time also saw his first juvenile literary efforts, short stories penned late at night in the attic, and sent anonymously with no return address to national magazine editors.

Enrolling at Stanford in 1920, he began a sketchy academic career of five years with no degree taken—periodically skipping semesters to work as a farm laborer in the Salinas Valley. In 1925, he dropped out and took a ship to New York to chase his literary dreams. At a stop in Havana he spent most of his money on a drunken spree and

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arrived in New York in midwinter with three dollars in his pocket. A Stanford friend got him a job as a laborer at the newly rising Madison Square Garden, where he pushed wheelbarrows full of wet concrete up wooden ramps for twelve hours a day. A brief stint as a newspaper stringer for the *New York American* saw him fired for lack of reportorial skills, and, disillusioned, he returned to California.

He spent the next two years as a caretaker at a mountain estate near Lake Tahoe, where he wrote his first publishable work and met his first wife, Carol Henning. The novels of this period—*Cup of Gold* (1929), *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932), and *To a God Unknown* (1933)—were badly flawed, and all of them sold poorly. With *Tortilla Flat* in 1935, however, he finally found success by putting together his first-hand knowledge of rural California with the dire economic realities of the 1930s to form a large tableau from which to work.

Tortilla Flat was also the first of Steinbeck's books to be published by Pascal "Pat" Covici, an early enthusiast who rescued the writer from a bad contract and printed his books through the late 1930s. The novels and stories Steinbeck published from 1935 to 1938—*In Dubious Battle*, *The Red Pony*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Long Valley*—are some of his best and point steadily in theme to *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). Notwithstanding the success of all Steinbeck's titles in the late 1930s, Covici's firm went bankrupt in 1939. Landing a job as an editor at Viking, Covici took Steinbeck with him—and *The Grapes of Wrath* burst upon the nation.

The Grapes of Wrath began with a series Steinbeck did in 1936 for the *San Francisco News* on the plight of migrant farm workers. Further investigation in the squatters' camps of the San Joaquin Valley appalled him. In 1937, approximately seventy thousand migrant workers and their families—the much reviled "Okies," most having escaped the dust-bowl conditions of the Great Plains—were living in squalid tent cities in the San Joaquin Valley, hus-

Hulton-Deutsch Collection / CORBIS

Underwood & Underwood / CORBIS

Above: Steinbeck by himself in the 1930s. Below: With Elia Kazan in 1955.

tling for farm jobs that paid fifteen cents per hour. The camps were owned by agricultural conglomerates such as Associated Foods and guarded by armed men. When union representatives and members of the American Communist party tried to organize the migrants, the resulting strikes produced Mexican scab labor, riots, and murder. The winter of 1937 was wet in California, and the sodden camps were rife with malnutrition, influenza, and pneumonia.

The Grapes of Wrath, published by Viking in April 1939, was to become the bestselling book of the year. The screen rights sold for an astonishing $75,000; Steinbeck had been increasingly prosperous since *Tortilla Flat*, but the new book catapulted him into wealth. His home in Los Gatos was besieged by admirers and down-and-outers looking for handouts. His mail was so heavy with requests for money that he had his publishers screen it. He received death threats and was convinced Associated Foods was out to get him.

Marxist critics blasted the book for not going far enough in demanding social change. The main character, Tom Joad, was portrayed as an Emersonian and an anti-Marxist, reflecting Steinbeck's own reformist but non-radical views. From the nation's pulpits came charges of obscenity, particularly concerning the book's ending, where "Rose of Sharon" Joad offers her milk-heavy breasts to a dying man in a barn (a scene Covici and Viking wanted to cut). *The Grapes of Wrath* was publicly burned in Buffalo, East St. Louis, and Kern County, California.

But the controversies only fueled sales, and Steinbeck reacted badly, drinking heavily and ruining his marriage to Carol. He may have felt unbearable guilt at becoming rich by writing about poor people; certainly he gave away all the money from his 1940 Pulitzer Prize to a cash-strapped writer and friend named Ritchie Lovejoy, and he alarmed Covici by announcing that he had decided he was through with fiction—deciding instead to become an amateur scientist.

He did, in fact, collaborate with his friend Edward Ricketts on a book about marine biology called *Sea of Cortez: A Leisurely Journey of Travel and Research* (1941). The operator of a ramshackle research laboratory on the Monterey waterfront that sold specimens to museums and university labs, Ricketts was the great friend of Steinbeck's life. Even back in the mid-1930s, Steinbeck would hang around the lab for hours, indulging amateur scientific interests, and engaging the widely read Ricketts in serious philosophical debate over a jug of cheap wine. The marine biologist appears as the character "Doc" in *Cannery Row* (1945), and his death in a 1948 car accident devastated the writer.

Steinbeck quickly returned to fiction, but he was right about the problem *The Grapes of Wrath* presented him: In his remaining thirty years, he would

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never equal it. Still, from 1940 on, he churned out an impressive amount of wide-ranging work. In 1942 came *The Moon is Down*, a competent World War II thriller about resistance fighters in Norway. In 1943, he traveled to North Africa and Sicily as a war correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune*, where he met the legendary photojournalist Robert Capa. The ensuing friendship resulted in a 1947 trip to the Soviet Union with the photographer and *A Russian Journal* (1948), featuring Capa's pictures of everyday Russian life with text by Steinbeck.

After an initial wariness of the temptations of Hollywood, Steinbeck did some screenwriting in the 1940s and 1950s, after good film adaptations of *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Of Mice and Men*. Among other projects, he wrote the Oscar-nominated screenplay for Elia Kazan's *Viva Zapata!* Along the way, he wrote the flawed but interesting *East of Eden* (1952), an excellent New England story, *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961), and the lighthearted *Travels with Charley* (1962).

But then, in 1962, Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature—and the general mild praise granted an established writer at the tail end of his career turned to vicious attacks. Such prominent critics as Edmund Wilson, Alfred Kazin, and Arthur Mizener savaged him in print. In an editorial ostensibly congratulating him, the *New York Times* bemoaned the Nobel committee's "mechanics of selection" that picked Steinbeck, a living anachronism working outside "the main currents of American writing."

But the truth is, John Steinbeck was always outside the main currents of American writing. For a brief moment in the 1930s, those currents matched his own, and he had the good luck to be at the peak of his talent when that moment came along.

Still, it was his own way that he followed, and Steinbeck—the real Steinbeck of *In Dubious Battle*, *The Red Pony*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *The Grapes of Wrath*—never really left the back roads and hidden places of California: the hot sun, the wind, the rain, the people, and the fertile earth. ♦

Making Science Fiction

The unmysterious future, according to Jules Verne.

BY JOHN SUTHERLAND

Asked to name the first parents—the Adams and the Eves—of science fiction, most literary chroniclers come up with five names: Mary Shelley (for *Frankenstein*), Edward Bulwer-Lytton (for *The Coming Race*), Edgar Allan Poe (who can claim to have invented all genres), Jules Verne, and H.G. Wells.

The Mysterious Island
by Jules Verne
Modern Library, 640 pp., $23.95

Science fiction's record for prophecy of the shape of things to come is lamentable. But of the founding quintet, Verne was the most clairvoyant. When the young French author pitched a proposal to his publisher, Pierre Jules-Hetzel, called *Paris in the Twentieth Century*, the hardheaded book man turned it down as preposterous. According to Caleb Carr in his introduction to Jordan Stump's new translation of Verne's *The Mysterious Island*, "Set in the 1960s, the book described a city consumed by runaway materialism and shrouded in pollution caused by automobile fumes, a city where people commonly possessed such luxuries as photo-telephonic facsimile machines but forsook even basic cultural knowledge."

The Mysterious Island is put forward as Verne's *chef d'oeuvre*. It is certainly substantial, and the new translation has the virtue of the very best Englishing—one does not notice it. The volume's introducer, Caleb Carr, is a writer who, in his own fiction, has profitably hybridized American historical settings of the Gilded Age with what H.G. Wells called "scientific romance." Carr writes lovingly about Verne, in whose work he is evidently steeped, although he makes rather hard work of the title: "Mysterious" is not connected with late-nineteenth-century detective fiction but an echo of Eugène Sue's runaway bestseller of the 1840s, *The Mysteries of Paris*.

Published in 1875, *The Mysterious Island* opens in March 1865. Five Americans—opponents of the Confederacy trapped in Richmond, which is ringed by the forces of General Ulysses Grant—make an escape by balloon. But, instead of reaching the Union forces, they are carried by storm winds far into the Pacific. The narrative begins with the necessary action hook and a barrage of exclamation marks: "Are we rising? No! Quite the reverse! We're sinking! For the love of God! Drop some ballast! That's the last sack emptied! Is the balloon climbing now? No! I think I hear waves crashing! We're over the ocean!"

Was ever an adventure story opened with more brio? In fact, the five occupants of the balloon (a mixed crew of men, including a black former slave, Neb) are over an island in the Pacific, and a Robinsoniad ensues. But Verne's version is distinctively different from its predecessors: Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Wyss's *Swiss Family Robinson*, Marryat's *Masterman Ready*, or Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (different, too, from its successors: Hughes's *High Wind in Jamaica*, Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, and the movie *Castaway*).

Verne, a man of his time, was preoccupied with two great recent historical events: the American Civil War (of whose republican outcome he heartily, as a liberal Frenchman, approved) and the Prussian siege and occupation of Paris in 1870 (of which, as a patriotic

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Frenchman, he mightily disapproved). As Brian Aldiss reminds us in his history of science fiction, *The Trillion Year Spree*, the genre is most often prodromic rather than prophetic. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, that is, tells us more about the 1948 in which George Orwell wrote his dystopia than the 1984 in which he set his tale. *The Mysterious Island* allegorizes French nationalist resentment at the military humiliation visited on their country and the firm belief that, as in America, the forces of virtue would eventually prevail.

From the first, Verne calls his band of Americans "colonizers." There are (conveniently) no natives on the island and thus no problem of relations with the subaltern colonized. The heroic five, under their engineer leader, Cyrus Smith, name their new home with some pomp. "Let us give it the name of a great citizen, my friends," Cyrus declares, "a man now engaged in a fight for the unity of the American republic! Let us call it Lincoln Island!" Verne's book was initially serialized and he ends the installment with what English serialists like Wilkie Collins (motto: make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, make 'em wait) called a curtain line: "The date was March 30th, 1865. They could not have known that sixteen days later a terrible crime would be committed in Washington, and that Abraham Lincoln would be felled on Good Friday by a fanatic's bullet."

In the two years that they are on the island, the colonists easily do the Promethean trick (not by rubbing sticks together, but by making phosphorus matches). They erect windmills and construct electric dynamos (telegraphy arrives in a few months). They smelt iron and forge steel. In fact, they recreate Western civilization in this godforsaken corner of the world—so easily, The Heart of Lightness, one might call it.

Much, too much, of the narrative is taken up with the colonists' civilizing and technological ingenuity. In the climax, Verne falls back on the Robinsoniad's standby device of pirates. Equally conventionally, the narrative ends with apocalypse, a volcanic eruption. There is a last-chapter revelation—something for which we readers have been made to wait hundreds of pages. In various emergencies, a mysterious and omnipotent hand has intervened—saving the colonizers from death and destruction. Who is their savior? It would be wrong to spoil the story (although, to his shame, Caleb Carr does just that in his introduction). Let me just say that you should refresh your acquaintance with Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* before reading *The Mysterious Island*.

Some aspects of this book have not lasted well. The wholly masculine dramatis personae, for example. The depiction of the former slave, Neb, is obnoxious, particularly a scene in which he fears his master—as he insists on calling him—is about to replace him as manservant with a trained orangutan. Verne's republican sympathies are shot through with the incorrigible prejudices of his age. Still, taken altogether—in its new translation, handsome livery, and with its reader-friendly apparatus—this is a book to recommend. Although in the middle sections I would recommend turning over three pages at a time. ♦

Fighting for Philosophy

When Ludwig met Karl.

BY DAVID GUASPARI

Ludwig Wittgenstein and Karl Popper met only once—just after World War II, when Popper addressed the Cambridge University Moral Sciences Club. Popper challenged Wittgenstein head on: Philosophy, he said, addresses genuine problems and not, as Wittgenstein would have it, "puzzles" that disappear when proper mental hygiene clears up our conceptual muddles.

Wittgenstein's Poker
The Story of a Ten-Minute Argument Between Two Great Philosophers
by David Edmonds and John Eidinow
Ecco, 352 pp., $24

In response Wittgenstein became agitated, fiddling with the fireplace poker as he argued, and eventually stormed out. Versions of this story include claims that he did so in exasperation at Popper's obtuseness, or after Bertrand Russell snapped at him ("Wittgenstein, put down that poker at once!"), or after Popper skewered him with a witty retort. Popper's autobiography declares a winner. When Wittgenstein, shaking the poker for emphasis, challenged him for an example of a genuine moral principle, Popper rose to the occasion: "Not to threaten visiting lecturers with pokers." Twenty years after Popper's autobiography, and half a century after the quarrel, a friend of Wittgenstein (and a witness) still cared enough to call Popper, in print, a liar.

In *Wittgenstein's Poker*, David Edmonds and John Eidinow use the incident as a hook from which to suspend accounts of the protagonists' intimidating personalities, of the brilliant *fin de siècle* Viennese society into which (in very different social spheres) they were born, and of their radically opposed philosophical views.

Wittgenstein—routinely called magnetic, intense, passionate, pure, incandescent—was born into fabulous wealth. Sent to Manchester as an engineering student, he sought out and dazzled Bertrand Russell in Cambridge, but cut short his studies with Russell to enlist in the Great War. He pulled strings to get a posting to the front and wrote a classic of analytic philosophy, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, in the trenches. After the war he renounced his inheritance and disappeared into the

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life of a rural grade-school teacher—using, he said, the pain of teaching to overcome the pain of philosophy. He eventually regained interest in philosophy and was coaxed back to Cambridge. "God has arrived," said John Maynard Keynes. "I met him on the 5:15 train." Wittgenstein could not be unoriginal: Among other things, he patented a design for an aircraft engine, helped design a modernist house, and published a dictionary for schoolchildren.

Karl Popper came from the cultivated middle class. Forced to leave college when hyperinflation ruined his father, he got a degree through the back door by enrolling in a teacher's training course. If Wittgenstein was a cult figure, then Popper was (in his own view) a perennial outsider. The famed Vienna Circle of philosophers and mathematicians doted on Wittgenstein, even when he refused to attend their meetings, but they didn't invite Popper to join. Popper fled the Germans not to Oxford or Cambridge but to New Zealand and then to the slightly less remote London School of Economics. He published prolifically, becoming the world's most eminent philosopher of science and (again, in his own view) the leading scourge of fashionable intellectual nonsense: logical positivism, Marxism, Freudianism—and Wittgenstein.

A clash between Wittgenstein and Popper should be high drama, but played out as low comedy: Famous Philosophers Duel with Red-Hot Pokers! The book's one flaw is to run with this gimmick and pretend that some mystery needs solving. No suspense is spoiled by disclosing that Popper's story is found implausible, though not a calculated lie. And nine-tenths of the book—vivid biographies and cultural history, clear and defensible broad-brush summaries of philosophical ideas—are irrelevant to this resolution.

The silly spat threatens to distract readers from an impassioned conflict of ideas. Popper's views are clear. His most celebrated teaching identified the distinguishing mark of scientific knowledge as its "falsifiability." A genuinely scientific theory has definite consequences (predictions) that can be challenged by public procedures. Scientific knowledge is what we provisionally accept because it has, so far, passed all the tests. The permanent threat of refutation makes that knowledge more reliable than the humanly fallible and prejudiced scientists who discover it. A natural correlate is Popper's spirited defense of the "open" society—with its liberal politics of piecemeal trial-and-error reform—against "closed" utopian and totalitarian regimes that derive their authority from pseudo-scientific claims to know, and know how to shape, the human future.

Both photos: Hulton Archive.

Ludwig Wittgenstein and Karl Popper.

Compared with all this, Wittgenstein, in stark contrast, is enigmatic. The *Tractatus* claims to solve some of the deepest problems of philosophy by precisely delimiting what can be meaningfully *said*—and therefore, in Wittgenstein's view, what can be thought. The meaning of a proposition is revealed by analyzing it into an ultimate logical form that provides a picture—notoriously elusive word—of a possible state of the world. Wittgenstein offers no concrete examples of such logical analyses, but argues that they must nonetheless exist. His brief "logical poem" ends mystically: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must remain silent." Some important things, such as morality, cannot be meaningfully talked about, though they can be shown—for example, by moral behavior. The *Tractatus*, straining the limits of language, finally declares itself to be largely nonsense: It is a ladder that, once climbed, can be discarded.

The *Tractatus* was striking, original, and eventually famous. Yet Wittgenstein, when he returned to philosophy, devoted himself to an equally original and even more influential project that undermined it. His *Philosophical Investigations* rejects the central proposal of the *Tractatus*, a universal logical analysis of language. Language, as various as life, does more than make assertions. We joke, request, command, pray, etc. The sense of particular utterances depends on the part they play in some practice such as joking or praying—but it is a fundamental error to suppose that these practices have any common essence, logical or otherwise. They share nothing but a "family resemblance." What we call a philosophical problem is only a symptom of a muddled search for such illusory essences. The philosopher's task is to make philosophical problems disappear: "to show the fly the way out of the fly bottle." The *Investigations* offers not a doctrine but practice at climbing out of the bottle.

So what was at stake in Wittgenstein and Popper's long-ago quarrel? Bragging rights, of course, and temperamental and professional antipathies. But also the fundamental nature of philosophy. Can it address our deepest perplexities? Can it, as Popper believed, contribute to human progress? Or is it only

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a tragic compulsion? The word "philosophy" is not currently in tip-top shape: People can speak without irony of "philosophies" of web-page design; bookstores don't always feel a need to distinguish philosophy from self-help or the occult. *Wittgenstein's Poker* deserves a large audience and, with luck, may awaken some general readers to the excitement of the real thing, of large questions pursued with reason and passion. ♦

Small Wars . . .

and why they're worth fighting.

BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

When we think of our wars, what come naturally to mind are the great conflicts, the landmark battles, and the intrepid names: the Revolutionary War and World War II, Gettysburg and Iwo Jima, Grant and Sherman, Pershing and Patton. Less well known is an entire parallel universe of conflict that was just as pivotal in protecting American interests and lives. Our "small" wars involved equal courage and risks, and saw soldiers every bit as bold and competent as a Stonewall Jackson or Matthew Ridgeway.

The Savage Wars of Peace
Small Wars and the Rise of American Power
by Max Boot
Basic, 384 pp., $27.50

In *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*, the *Wall Street Journal*'s Max Boot educates us about these conflicts. Far from being isolationist before World War II and the formation of NATO, America from the very beginning of the republic intervened in a nearly continual series of civil wars, coups, and hostage rescues. Starting with attacks on the Barbary Coast pirates between 1801 and 1805, the nation has always interfered in other nations' business far from home.

Two generations of college students have been taught that all such "adventurism" is nothing but imperialism and running-dog capitalism—and Boot does not deny that states naturally send in their forces out of national interest rather than mere idealism. But he shows that the majority of the time the Marines intervened to stop the slaughter of civilians, to retaliate against the killing of Americans and destruction of their property, and to prevent chaos from spreading beyond a country's borders. While such incursions often served the local property-owning elites and corrupt grandees, such interventionists as Thomas Jefferson, Chester A. Arthur, and Teddy Roosevelt assumed that order and stable governments were usually preferable to mass uprisings, constant revolution, and mob rule.

Boot's chronological narrative of American intercession before Vietnam is astonishing. We were in the Pacific islands, China, Korea, and Samoa almost yearly throughout the nineteenth century. The Philippine War (1899-1902) was followed by the Caribbean (1898-1914), Haiti (1915-1934), the Dominican Republic (1916-1924), Mexico (1916-1917), Russia (1918-1920), and then back again to Nicaragua (1926-1934), and China (1901-1941).

The key to success was highly trained officers such as Edward Preble, David Porter, and Admirals Perry and Dewey (what Boot calls the "naval aristocracy"). They were joined by an even rarer group of swashbucklers, which included the likes of Stephen Decatur ("If you insist in receiving powder as a tribute, you must expect to receive balls with it"), "Fighting Fred" Funston (who enlisted "as much from a love of adventure and a desire to see some fighting as from any more worthy motive"), and Smedley Butler ("My show of verve or bluff was what made the expeditions absolutely bloodless"). The rank and file were usually volunteers, occasionally unsavory and frightening in their lethality. The United States Marines once published a manual (*Small Wars Manual*) drawing on decades of lore about how to do it right—regretfully forgotten during Vietnam, but recently reprinted and updated for their officers.

The combatants did not care much about domestic criticism, were willing to take casualties, and believed that rapid, bold action aimed at the center of enemy insurrection—such as capturing an Emilio Aguinaldo in the Philippines—would collapse resistance. They were usually right. And their legacy until Vietnam was that Americans overseas were usually safe. A theme throughout Boot's *Savage Wars of Peace* is that only a confident America that believes that its own values are better than those of its adversaries can muster the will to engage in these nasty and easily misunderstood fights.

Boot's well-written narrative is not only fascinating reading, but didactic as well, as we learn that most of our current orthodoxy about intervention is neither historically nor logically sound. American presidents never much worried about "undeclared wars" and rarely sought to consult the Congress about such "constabulary actions." The military was glad to oblige—and paid little heed to whether getting out was as easy as getting in. It certainly had no reluctance to fight when vastly outnumbered or to help treat the sick, feed the hungry, and jail renegades in its way. Nor did Americans seem perturbed that there would always be locals who resented their presence. And rather than getting "bogged down" or "overstretched," our generals felt that such constant fighting ensured that

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when we really did go to wars in Europe and the Pacific, our large conscript forces would be trained by a small nucleus of veterans of every conceivable landscape and conflict.

What was the ultimate result of all this? Boot believes that America's small and savage wars have ensured the safety of the sea-lanes (the Barbary intervention), helped limit disease and corruption (Central America), advanced human rights (at least the nineteenth-century missionaries' version of it in China), protected our borders (pursuing Villa in Mexico), and promoted the global principles of free trade and open access (Japan and Korea).

Hulton / Archive

General John Pershing in Mexico in 1916, chasing Pancho Villa.

So what happened to this confident policy? Why was there so much resistance to such easy campaigns as Grenada and an insistence that we lose not a single life in Serbia? The answer is Vietnam and the reaction to Vietnam. Here Boot is quite explicit in bringing to the fore the two villains of his argument: generals like Westmoreland, who thought they could fight a conventional land war in Asia while shackled by political restraints; and Colin Powell, who learned the wrong lessons from that fiasco, and whose "Powell Doctrine" requiring almost utopian American advantages before engaging enemies abroad stops us from doing ourselves—and the world—a great deal of good.

Critics will wonder whether a few thousand special operatives really could have galvanized South Vietnamese resistance, or fought effectively as advisers and commandos against an enemy of millions that was armed daily by Russia and China with sophisticated weapons. But Boot is content to answer back that the old method of fighting small wars at least would have been no worse than unleashing tanks, bombers, and search-and-destroy missions against an enemy hardly like the Germans or Japanese.

Boot might have been willing to devote more analysis to the changes that were forced upon us by communism. The rise of a nuclear Russia and China radically changed the complexion of such interventions. Between 1946 and 1990, America's enemies could seek shelter under the nuclear umbrella of the Soviet Union to profess an ideology of egalitarianism that was often appealing to the downtrodden. An awareness of these changes would only enhance much of Boot's argument—for what was feasible for Americans before the rise of worldwide Soviet totalitarianism is practicable again with its demise. With little chance of Russia's threatening our Marines, and communism bankrupt as an ideology in the eyes of most in the world, it becomes increasingly difficult for isolationists and prevaricators to suggest that we either have the wrong message or that we will endanger more than we save.

Powell, who was scarred by that Vietnam quagmire, has opposed nearly all of America's incursions, wrongly believing that we cannot win small wars or that we must husband our stretched resources for a conventional war that can be won cheaply, quickly, and neatly. The problem is, as Boot repeatedly notes, that our enemies may be wise enough not to fight the kind of conflict Powell wants.

Fortunately, there are still interventionists in the American establishment, and there are military units—Special Forces, SEALs, Marines—who are willing and able to carry out these most distasteful of missions. Their most recent work is unheralded, but operations abroad did not all end up like Vietnam, the failed Iranian hostage rescue, Haiti, or Somalia. Panama, Grenada, and Serbia, for example, are all better places because of our past actions. Even the less-known rescuing of diplomats and civilians in Africa or protecting tankers in the Persian Gulf were worth the risks and costs.

The events after September 11 give *The Savage Wars of Peace* an uncanny timeliness and sadly confirm almost all of Boot's dispassionate warnings. Past reluctance to intervene directly against al Qaeda gave the terrorists both material advantages and a sense of confidence to attempt their attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Our conventional forces are able to stop Saddam Hussein, but they have little experience at the kind of work necessary to hunt down the fleeing terrorists in Afghanistan or to root out cells in unfriendly countries. Only a military that has professionals willing to lose their lives in such risky missions, and a method of operation that is time-proven, will allow an American president the range of options necessary to thwart embryonic challenges to our national security over there rather than deal with full-blown ones right here.

Max Boot's *The Savage Wars of Peace* will seem to a few unapologetically imperialistic, but far more readers will rightly see that its message is instead a moral one—and never more timely than now. ♦

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Sounding American

Oklahoma! *and the simple genius of Oscar Hammerstein II.* BY JOHN PODHORETZ

In the past decade, Broadway has been reintroduced to the work of an American dramatist whose worldwide fame never quite translated into proper respect. He was an innovator and a craftsman, and yet his name somehow became synonymous with hidebound and creaky traditions. The simplicity of his work was taken for simple-mindedness, and his heartfelt earnestness for sickly treacle.

I know this, because I was one of his naysayers, and I have learned to regret my own past opinion of Oscar Hammerstein II. The stunning variety of his contributions to the American musical—in lyrics set to music by the twentieth century's greatest stage composers, Jerome Kern and Richard Rodgers, and in the librettos in which he gave those songs a home—has been on display almost continuously of late. The new version of *Oklahoma!*, which opened at the Gershwin Theater in March, is the eighth major Hammerstein show in as many years—a period in which his work has come to dominate the Broadway musical as completely as it did before his death in 1960.

Carousel was staged at Lincoln Center in 1994 and ran longer than it did in its original 1945 production. That same year, a mammoth revival of the 1927 *Show Boat* originated in Toronto and created a sensation with its fully restored Hammerstein libretto, which used rough racial language. *The King and I* came in 1996, and its two-year run was followed by its conversion into a full-length motion-picture cartoon. *The Sound of Music* returned to Broadway in 1998 and was a huge hit in spite of expectations that any new stage production would only disappoint the tens of millions of fans of the Oscar-winning Julie Andrews movie version.

At the same time, ABC turned the 1957 television musical *Cinderella* into a vehicle for pop stars Brandy Norwood and Whitney Houston—and then cast Glenn Close and Harry Connick Jr. in a new version of *South Pacific*, the most expensive television movie ever made. After *Flower Drum Song* appears in New York next fall, only Rodgers and Hammerstein's three flops will remain unrevived (and I doubt *Allegro*, *Me and Juliet*, and *Pipe Dream* will have second lives, because they really are third-rate).

Hammerstein began his professional career at the age of twenty-three in 1918, and by the time of his death forty-two years later, he had written more enduring material with a greater variety of collaborators than anyone else in American theater or American popular song. While he was a student at Columbia University, his lyrics were set to music by George Gershwin and his future partner, Richard Rodgers. In the 1920s, Hammerstein began co-writing the lyrics and librettos of several enormously popular operettas: *Rose Marie*, for instance, which gave birth to the myth of the noble Canadian Mountie, and *The New Moon*, whose most famous song spoke of "stout-hearted men who will fight for the right they adore."

In 1926, Jerome Kern asked Hammerstein to try his hand at an adaptation of *Show Boat*, Edna Ferber's sprawling saga about a traveling minstrel show performed on a boat on the Mississippi. Hammerstein and Kern wrote together for the next fifteen years, but the other shows and movies they worked on were thin and did only modestly well. Hammerstein was approached in 1942 by Richard Rodgers, who was fed up with his unstable lyricist, Lorenz Hart. Hammerstein hadn't produced a major hit since *Show Boat*. But together he and Rodgers would become the most successful team ever to write for the stage.

It's worth noting that 90 percent of the time, Hammerstein wrote the lyrics before Rodgers wrote the music. It has always been far too easy for critics to praise Rodgers's gorgeous tunes while scorning Hammerstein's occasionally infelicitous word choices. But the fact is that Hammerstein had a great deal to do with the rhythm and tone of the music to which his lyrics were set.

Among Hammerstein's lyric-writing contemporaries were such wizards as Hart, Cole Porter, and E.Y. Harburg. He couldn't match their ability to manipulate words and rhymes with scorching wit—and he knew it. In a wonderful 1949 essay on the art of the lyric, Hammerstein wrote: "While I, on occasion, place a timid, encroaching foot on the territory of these . . . masters, I never carry my invasion very far. . . . I admire them and envy them their fluidity and humor, but I refuse to compete with them. Aside from my shortcomings as a wit and a rhymester—or, perhaps, because of them—my inclinations lead me to a more primitive type of lyric."

Unlike Hart, who could rhyme "laughable" with "unphotographable" with uncanny ease, Hammerstein didn't reek of self-conscious sophistication. His humor was far more broad. The wildly flirtatious Ado Annie, the comic relief in *Oklahoma!*, says of herself, "Other girls are coy and hard to catch, / but other girls ain't having any fun! / Every time I lose a wrestling match / I have a funny feeling that I won!" These are monosyllabic rhymes of the sort scorned by Hart, but they are entirely appropriate for an uneducated seventeen-year-old girl in 1905 Oklahoma. What's more, thrilling as lyrical word-brilliance can be, it can harm a song. "A rhyme should be unassertive, never standing out too noticeably," Hammerstein pointed out. "If a listener is made rhyme-conscious, his interest may be diverted from the story of the song."

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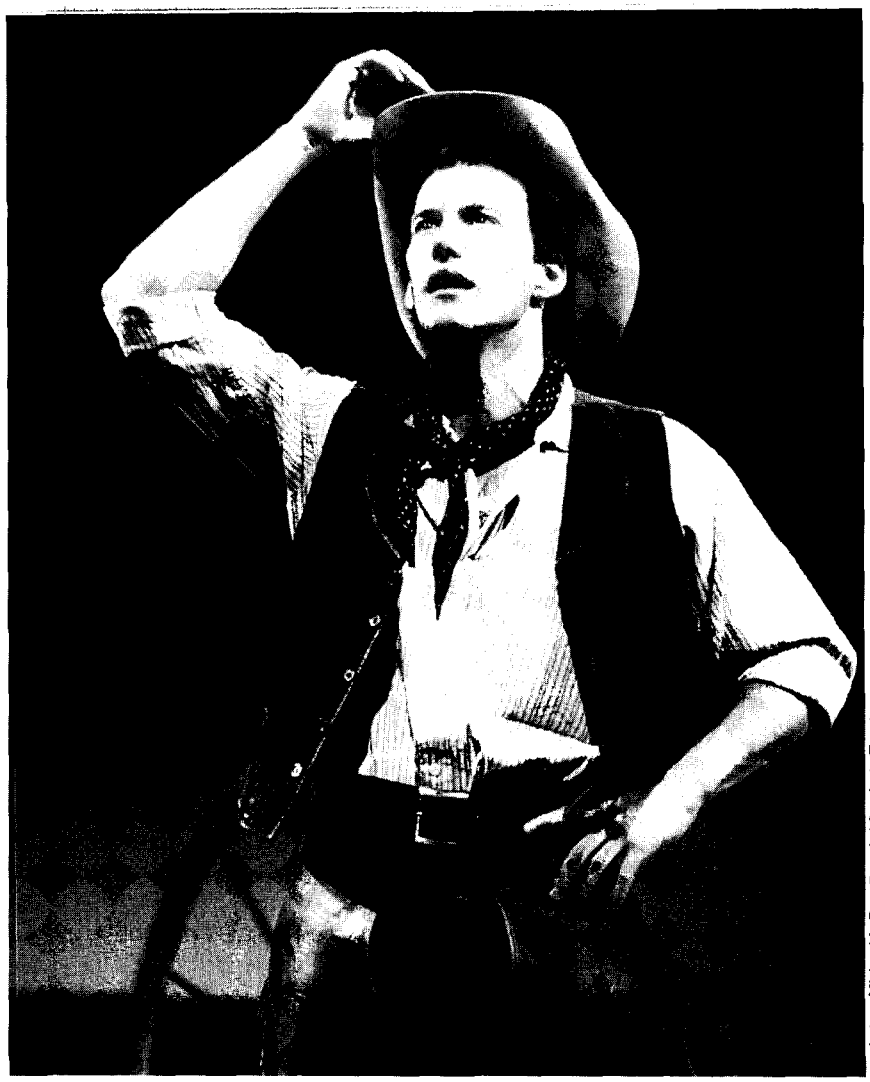
Hammerstein was, in fact, the opposite of "primitive." He was something of a visionary. He single-handedly destroyed forty years of theatrical tradition by opening *Oklahoma!* with a simple image of a woman at a butter churn and a single voice singing a cappella offstage. Before his innovation, the first ten minutes of a Broadway musical were often thrown away as the audience got settled. "There was always an opening chorus at the rise of the curtain," he noted, "and it was never expected that the audience would understand the words. . . . [Then] came a number professionally called the 'icebreaker' . . . a fill-in song written to quiet down the audience after the opening chorus and postpone any important action in the story until all the latecomers had been seated."

He had breached tradition sixteen years earlier as well, with the opening of *Show Boat*. The curtain rises on black workers in the 1880s singing: "Niggers all work on de Mississippi, / Niggers all work while de white folks play, / Loadin' up boats wid bales of cotton, / Gittin' no rest till de Judgment Day." The stark image of the suffering levee workers doing manual labor and the grim lyrics they sang were as sobering in 1927 as they are today. And the use of the N-word was as upsetting. The sight and sound of Jim Crow laborers bitterly exclaiming their mistreatment had the effect of stunning the lighthearted Jazz Age Broadway musical audience into a shocked silence, just as the very sound of the word "nigger" can provoke a shocked silence in us. There was one of those maddening and stupid controversies in the early 1990s when the revival of *Show Boat* was first staged in Toronto. Director Harold Prince chose to restore the use of the word "nigger," which had been bowdlerized for more than fifty years (first to "darkies," then to "colored folks," then to "here we all"). A Toronto minister initiated protests, assuming that white producers were bringing back an old minstrel show. In context, it's obvious how wrongheaded that notion was. The song shows both of Hammerstein's signature aspects: his ability to compress a range of emotion in very few words, and the depth and breadth of his humanity and compassion.



All photos: Michael LePoer Trench / Gershwin Theater.

Patrick Wilson as Curly in the Gershwin Theater production of Oklahoma!

The most heartening aspect of the Hammerstein revivals is the way they reveal the maturity and wisdom at the heart of shows we had all somehow come to consider sickeningly sweet. (Only *The Sound of Music* really does go too far, with dancing nuns in full habit, but it might be pointed out that the libretto was written by others, not by the ailing Hammerstein.) "Lots of things happen to folks," says Aunt Eller, the voice of common sense in *Oklahoma!*, to her innocent niece in the play's key speech. "Sickness, and being poor and hungry, even being old and afraid to die. That's the way it is, cradle to grave. And you *can* stand it. There's one way. You got to be hearty, you got to be. You can't deserve the sweet and tender things in life unless you're tough."

I had somehow remembered that *Oklahoma!* ended with the cast celebrating the marriage of the farmgirl and the cowboy, shouting "Oklahoma! OK!" It doesn't. Following that joyous song, there's a killing on stage. Hammerstein did not wrap his shows up with a nice ribbon. A heartbreaking death occurs in the second act of *Carousel*. One of the key characters in *South Pacific* dies in World War II. The king in *The King and I* dies, as does one of the show's young lovers. And *The Sound of Music* concludes with the Von Trapp family fleeing the Nazis.

These are the kinds of tragedies that require the kind of toughness that makes it possible for Hammerstein's characters to "deserve the sweet and tender things in life." His shows deal mostly with inarticulate and ordinary people struggling to make sense of their feelings and the world around them, and yet Hammerstein always gives his characters their emotional and psychological due.

In *Oklahoma!*, the character treated with the most remarkable compassion is the villain, Jud Fry (played on

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Broadway by an actor of titanic gifts, Shuler Hensley). Jud nearly rapes the show's heroine, Laurey, and twice tries to kill the hero, Curly. And yet Hammerstein makes his frontiersman's loneliness and hunger for love almost palpable. Jud becomes obsessed with Laurey because she did him a single act of kindness: "Last time I see you alone it was winter, with the snow six inches deep in drifts when I was sick. You brung me that hot soup out to the smokehouse and give it to me, and me in bed. I hadn't shaved in two days. You asked me if I had any fever and you put your hand on my head to see." Living in the smokehouse on Laurey's farm surrounded by pictures of scantily-clad girls from the *Police Gazette*, he sings bitterly, "I sit by myself like a cobweb on a shelf, / By myself in a lonely room."

It has never been the usual practice for the same person to write the lyrics and the book of a show, but Hammerstein's talent for doing both was the key to his art. His characters are consistent, whether speaking prose or singing poesy. One of the most striking things about Hammerstein's work is how often he returned, in both lyrics and story, to the subject of sexual awakening and erotic yearning—and how often he explored these subjects in the voices of young women.

"Why should I have spring fever / When I know it isn't spring?" So sings a "starry-eyed, vaguely discontented" teenage girl who is "as restless as a willow in a windstorm." She wishes she "were somewhere else / Walking down a strange new street / Hearing words that I have never heard / From a man I've yet to meet." These lyrics come from the exquisite "It Might As Well Be Spring," which won Hammerstein and Rodgers an Oscar in 1945.

The same sort of feelings haunt Magnolia in *Show Boat*, Laurey in *Oklahoma!*, Nellie in *South Pacific*, Tuptim in *The King and I*, and Maria in *The Sound of Music*. They all seek to deny their yearnings, but cannot. "Might as well make believe I love you," Magnolia sings to Ravenal. "Don't throw bouquets at me," Laurey says to Curly. "People will say we're in love."

This is most memorably rendered in the opening of *Carousel*, in which the antsy young Julie loses her job and her home in turn-of-the-century Maine because she tarries too long with a carnival barker. She is left alone with him on the village green. "I'm never going to marry," she tells him, "and a girl who don't marry has got to be much more particular." He wants to know "how do you know what you'd do if you loved me. Or how you'd feel—or anything." And she tells him, in the most soaring melody of Rodgers's astonishing career: "If I loved you, / Words wouldn't come in an easy way, / Round in circles they'd go. / Longing to tell you but afraid and shy."

Just before they kiss, Julie looks up at the trees and says: "You're right about there being no wind. The blossoms are just coming down by themselves. Just their time to, I reckon." That kiss will lead to marriage, and the marriage to disaster, but we are left in no doubt: She is one of those blossoms, and it is her time.

He could be as soulful on the subject of domestic contentedness as he is about the mysteries of the erotic. In 1937, he and Kern wrote "The Folks Who Live on the Hill." The song, never one of Hammerstein's most famous, has been kept alive by cabaret singers like Mel Torme and Andrea Marcovicci—and it offers an indelible portrait of a life well-lived in quiet harmony.

It is Hammerstein's greatest lyric, because it is his purest. "Someday," a young man tells his sweetheart, "we'll build a home on a hilltop high, you and I, / Shiny and new." People will call us "the folks who live on the hill," he adds, and the song begins to journey through the years. "We may be adding a thing or two, a wing or two. / We will make changes as any family will." From their veranda, they will have "the sort of view that seems to want to be seen."

And then, with only the word "and" to mark the melting away of the decades, they become old:

> And when the kids grow up and leave us,
> We'll sit and look at that same old view, just we two . . .
> The folks who like to be called
> What we have always been called,
> "The folks who live on the hill."

"The most important ingredient of a good song is sincerity," Hammerstein wrote. "Let the song be yours and yours alone. However important, however trivial, believe it. . . . Say what is on your mind as carefully, as clearly, as beautifully as you can."

This is superb advice for any writer—or for anyone, for that matter. Oscar Hammerstein II "deserves the sweet and tender" praise of those of us who too often equate dazzle and genius. Hammerstein was not dazzling. But as a popular artist, he was one of the greatest geniuses ever produced in this country. ♦

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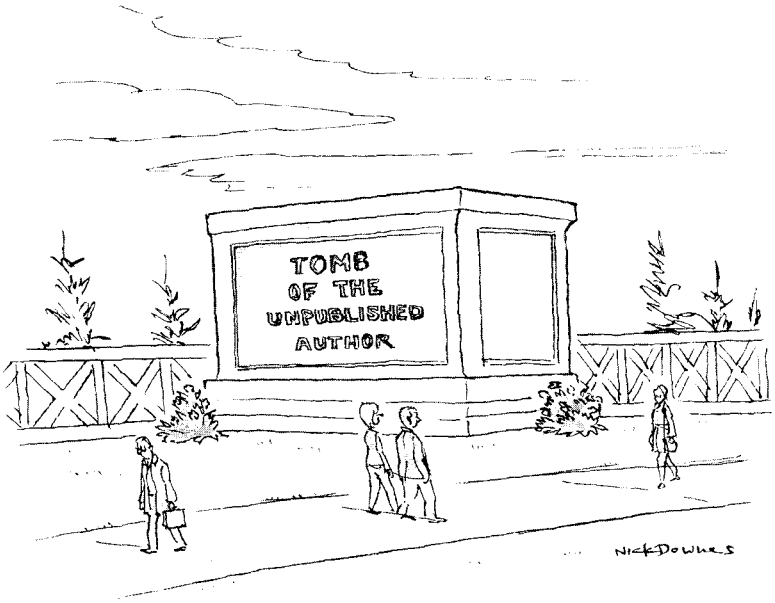

The Day the Book Club Died

Book sales are down everywhere, review sections in newspapers across the nation are being trimmed, popular fiction hasn't met serious fiction for so long they might as well be on different planets—and now Oprah Winfrey's book club is no more.

That last fact may actually offer the deepest commentary on the state of American writing. "It has become harder and harder," Oprah confided last week as she announced the shutting down of her project to sell America on her new favorites, "to find books on a monthly basis that I feel absolutely compelled to share."

"I'm speechless with regret and disappointment," one New York publicist told *Publishers Weekly*—as well he might be, for the one thing Oprah's Book Club always did was sell books. But, the truth is, the writing she used to feel compelled to share was never what anyone would call great fiction. As David Skinner put it in THE WEEKLY STANDARD back in the summer of 2000, "Oprah's Book Club is enamored almost exclusively of a literary world where the women are innocent, the men are brutal, and if you watch the river long enough, the body of your husband will float by."

There is no dearth of such books still being published. But if the new ones aren't even reaching a level sufficient for Oprah's Book Club, then what remains? Mystery novels, of course. Thrillers, science fiction, westerns, romances, and all the rest of genre fiction. Some of it is very good, but none of it assumes the huge burden of complete social explanation that we once expected the novel to bear. Art forms don't last forever. Novel reading was always—culturally speaking—an acquired taste. And that bellwether Oprah Winfrey may have spotted that it's going the way of madrigal singing and morris dancing.

—J. Bottum

Books in Brief

As I Lay Dying: Meditations Upon Returning **by Richard John Neuhaus (Basic, 224 pp., $22).** Only the confident would dare to share a book title with the winner of a Nobel Prize for literature, but this offering carries a Faulknerian gravity. Richard John Neuhaus—a Roman Catholic priest in the archdiocese of New York, author of such books as *The Naked Public Square*, and editor of the journal *First Things*—calls his small, personal, and potent book a set of "meditations upon returning."

Returning from death, that is. Sometime in the mid-1990s, an unsuspected abdominal tumor ruptured and almost killed him. The long months following found him battling the painful and debilitating effects of the several surgeries—one of them botched—that eventually brought him out of danger.

Recovery was slow, and Neuhaus had time to think about what had befallen him. Facing his close call in a way natural to such a prolific thinker and writer, he compiled a journal of reflections about a life unexpectedly given a renewed lease. It was not, however, a life *spared*, exactly: As Neuhaus reminds us, we are all dying and have already set out on the final journey whether we like it or not.

In certain ways, this book is a confession. Neuhaus writes freely of the fears and humiliations he endured during his crisis and convalescence, admitting to dire thoughts of death he had yet to confront, despite a lifetime ministering to others at death's door. But this is also a philosophical and, ultimately, a theological inquiry into the nature of death and dying, straining always for the meeting place of intellect and experience. This book is at once intimate and dispassionate, wrestling courageously with the irreducibles of time and eternity.

Emerging from the darkness, Neuhaus has produced an aching yet comforting account of one soul's struggle with the somber destiny that necessarily awaits all. *As I Lay Dying* is written for those who, like the lonely spirits in one of T.S. Eliot's plays, walk through the world "living, living, and partly living," which is perhaps each one of us.

—Tracy Lee Simmons

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To: All Western Correspondents April 1, 2002
From: Your Editors
Re: Welcome to Ramallah!

We are so glad you are covering the Israeli invasion of the West Bank for us. Unfortunately, many of you are fresh from covering the U.S. action in Afghanistan. Some of you may be tempted to cover this event the same way you covered that one. This is incorrect. The U.S. action in Afghanistan was an effort to root out a terror organization, which had sponsored suicide attacks on a democratic nation. The Israeli invasion of the West Bank is part of a tragic cycle of violence. The correct emotion in this case is that all violence is bad, whether committed by terrorists or against them.

Thus this story should be covered differently:

1) In Afghanistan we paid enormous amounts of attention to whether or not Osama bin Laden or Mullah Omar had been apprehended. You may remember that we ran charts showing the al Qaeda and Taliban leadership, noting which had been captured or killed. In the West Bank, however, we do not care if the terrorist organizers of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, or Al Aksa are killed or captured. We will simply not ask that question. To do so would be to imply the Israeli actions might be justified. It is impermissible.

2) In Afghanistan we spent a lot of time detailing the technical wizardry of U.S. forces, and the bravery of American Special Forces soldiers who were involved in hand-to-hand fighting with terrorists. In the West Bank, we shall not do that. Instead we shall dwell almost exclusively on the brutality of the soldiers. In Afghanistan a Taliban soldier killed by U.S. troops was a soldier. In Palestine, a soldier killed by Israelis is a "policeman" or "nurse."

3) In Afghanistan we covered civilian casualties from a distance. In the West Bank, we shall cover nothing but. Stories of ambulances being stopped are of special value (references to the terrorist practice of using ambulances to transport explosives shall not be included in the top 67 paragraphs of any story).

4) In Afghanistan the members of al Qaeda were treated as moral inferiors to the American troops. In Israel, remember, all are equal. For a model of how to do this, see Joel Greenberg's April 5 story in the New York Times: "2 Girls, Divided by War, Joined in Carnage." An Israeli girl woke up and decided to go shopping. A Palestinian girl decided to commit murder. But they were both lovely bright charming girls caught in this tragedy. Both victims!

Good Luck!

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Preventing F

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Harry Roundell is President of Decision Insights, Inc.

How corporations are managed, not who manages them, is the cause of business fraud. The public, the president, and the media focus on the venality of a handful of executives at Enron as the explanation for that company's collapse. Certainly anyone found guilty of violating the law should be punished, but bringing those individuals to justice alone will not stymie future fraud any more than bringing Osama bin Laden to justice will end terrorism. **We need to address the causes, not just the symptoms, of fraud.** Fraud never arises simply because of greed; it arises because some corporate governance arrangements give executives incentives to misreport performance in hopes of saving their company's reputation.

Research shows that the chances that a company will commit fraud can be predicted two years in advance. An accounting-fraud analysis, for instance, correctly predicted that Sunbeam, Rite Aid, Cendant, Informix, and Medaphis—to mention just a few cases—were at the highest risk of alleged fraud. It also identified Enron as a high-risk company in the mid-1990s. Of the 4 percent of firms classified as highest risk, 54 percent have subsequently been accused of fraud; that number jumps to 67 percent if a firm reached the highest risk classification more than once.

The fraud classification system relies on publicly available information, focusing on the incentives directors have to engage in oversight. It can help protect shareholders from fraud and enable boards of directors to restructure firms so that executives have the right performance incentives. Every company is organized around a controlling group that determines policies regarding the allocation of resources and the selection and retention of executives. The power of this group is used to predict leadership's actions.

Companies offer two basic categories of rewards: those that benefit shareholders and those that benefit select groups involved with the company. The mix of benefits offered in these two categories—shareholder benefits and insider benefits—makes the risk of fraud predictable.

The mix in senior management's compensation between rewards tied directly to performance (e.g., stock options) and personal rewards tied to its role in the company (e.g., personal salaries) influences its performance on behalf of shareholders. Likewise, the number of people involved in the day-to-day administration of a company influences the extent to which those individuals identify with the management team or with shareholder goals. Generally, the greater the focus on insider benefits to senior management, the higher the risk of fraud; the greater the political clout of senior management relative to external directors, the higher the risk of fraud; and the greater the commitment to stock options and benefits that encourage a long-term view, oversight, and balance between the influence of management and the board of directors, the lower the risk of fraud.

When auditors review governance structures and books, and are encouraged to consult with their clients about problems in the incentive structures, we will have come a long way toward eliminating fraud. Confidence in business requires that we move in these directions rather than putting our energies into finding greedy individuals to blame for what are manifestly corporate governance problems.

— Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Harry Roundell

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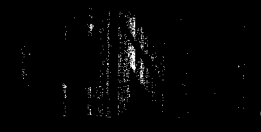

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